



Jordan Times

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Netanyahu aide met Syrian official in U.S. — radio
TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's aide has met with Syria's ambassador to Washington in the first direct contact between the two countries since Mr. Netanyahu was elected in May, Israeli radio said on Saturday. Mr. Netanyahu's political adviser Dore Gold held talks with Ambassador Walid Al Mualem in Washington on Friday before a State Department meeting of representatives from Israel, Syria, Lebanon, France and the United States. "He relayed a message from Netanyahu that Israel is interested in continuing the negotiations with Damascus," the radio's political reporter said from Washington. Israeli officials were not immediately available for comment.

Iraq, Turkey sign trade cooperation minutes
BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq and Turkish officials have ended talks on promoting trade between the two countries once Iraq's oil-for-food deal with the United Nations goes into effect. "Iraq and Turkey signed in Baghdad joint minutes to promote their trade and economic cooperation," Iraqi newspapers said on Saturday. The papers said the minutes were signed by Iraqi Trade Undersecretary Hatem Al Samarra'e and Turkey's Foreign Trade Undersecretary Nejat Eren, who brought along a delegation almost 100-strong. The five-day visit ended on Friday. The papers said trade areas would include oil, health, agriculture, transport, communications and industry. No details were given. Iraq's oil deal with the United Nations, signed in May, allows oil sales worth \$2 billion in six months for relief purposes.

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Queen Noor ends Bosnia visit

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Majesty Queen Noor returned home Saturday after attending a ceremony organised by thousands of Bosnian women in Tuzla to commemorate the fall of Srebrenica. Her Majesty gave a speech at the ceremony in which she assured the women of Srebrenica "that they were not alone," saying that "the women of our land, too, have repeatedly borne the consequences of war and upheaval; they too have to rebuild lives and communities shattered by years of strife." Her Majesty was received at the airport by His Majesty King Hussein, Royal Family members and senior officials.

Cabinet discusses subsidies

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti presided over a Cabinet session Saturday during which the ministers discussed the mechanism of rechanneling bread subsidies. Minister of Youth Mohammad Daoudieh told reporters after the meeting that specialised committees at the Ministry of Finance are working to find suitable formulas to cut government expenditure. During its regular weekly session, the Cabinet ratified two agreements with Yemen signed during Yemeni prime minister's visit to the Kingdom few weeks ago.

Blast near Egyptian embassy in Sanaa

SANAA (R) — An explosion was reported near the Egyptian embassy in Sanaa late on Saturday, an embassy official said. "An explosion took place near the embassy in Sanaa this evening. There were no material damages or casualties that resulted from it," he told Reuters. The official said the blast near government buildings was "apparently caused by explosives such as dynamite." The Egyptian embassy is located along one of Sanaa's main commercial streets.

Egypt court fines Islamist lawyers

CAIRO (R) — An Egyptian court has fined a group of Islamist lawyers who filed a suit against actress Yusra for published photographs they claimed were indecent and offensive, the official Al Gomhuria daily reported on Saturday. The court also asked the lawyers to pay 501 pounds (\$147) in compensation to the actress for suing her last December in connection with published stills of a movie she starred in showing the actress in a negligee. The Islamist lawyers had said the photographs, and the magazine which published them, were encouraging immorality and debauchery. Ms. Yusra's defence lawyer said the Islamist barristers were only seeking fame and their accusations were unfounded since the actress had no knowledge the photos would be published in any magazine.

King supports new measures aimed at reforming economy HM warns of groups working against interests of the country

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday came out in support of the policies of the government of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, saying that corrective economic measures are necessary to achieve economic reform and qualify the country for economic assistance from donor nations. In an address to senior armed forces officers during a visit to the Fourth Royal Mechanised Division's headquarters, the King said the armed forces personnel will receive payment to compensate them for the higher prices of bread through direct addition to their salaries. The King expressed hope that "the (economic) situation will improve and allow Jordan to prove to the rest of the world that it has carried out" the economic reform programmes in all fields and so it rightfully deserves assistance in its drive to achieve further construction and progress. The King said he has "full



confidence" in Mr. Kabariti whom, he said, is working along with his ministerial team "with dedication and loyalty" to serve the Kingdom and its interests. The King said he attended a press conference given by Mr. Kabariti Thursday to explain the reasons for raising bread prices despite pledges by the premier not

to do so because Mr. Kabariti "wanted to take full responsibility" for the actions of his government. King Hussein said he attended the meeting "because I wanted my position to be clear on these measures (regarding bread prices) and other future measures as long as they are directed towards serving the interests of this country and its people." The King cautioned against "some people who," he said, "have made a habit of working against everything that is sacred" and discrediting all the positive achievements of the country. "Regrettably," said the King, some people are acting in accordance with foreign policies that seek harm for the country and its people and "there are groups that try to thwart every effort to enable this country to stand on its own feet." The King expressed hope that the economic measures

Peace process, terrorism top agenda of Damascus Declaration meeting Ministers take tough stand on Israel

MUSCAT (Agencies) — Eight Arab foreign ministers began two days of talks Saturday set to be dominated by the Middle East peace process and regional security following last month's deadly bomb blast in Saudi Arabia. The problem of relations with Iraq and the on-going political unrest in Bahrain will also be on the agenda of the meeting of the eight signatories to the Damascus Declaration. The group includes Egypt and Syria, together with the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman. In an opening speech to delegates Omani Foreign Minister Yusuf Ibn Alawi Ibn Abdullah called for the pursuit of the policy of land-for-peace or face the end of normalising relations with Arab governments. Mr. Netanyahu told U.S. leaders in Washington this week that Israel would not turn over any more occupied land to Arabs and said the peace process should be based on security for peace. "Our reaction (to Mr. Netanyahu's comments) are in line with the political declaration from the Arab summit in Cairo," Mr. Abdullah said. Mr. Netanyahu infuriated Arab leaders by insisting

parties to find a solution to the peace process, as its success will guarantee peace and security" for the Jewish state, he said. The ministers toughened their stand towards Israel in reaction to the headline statements made by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu this week in Washington. "The recent statements by the Israeli prime minister will be the focus of the discussions between the eight ministers, who reaffirm the same positions taken by the Arab summit in Cairo," Mr. Ibn Abdullah, told AFP. Arab leaders at the June 22-23 summit in the Egyptian capital warned Israel's new right-wing government to pursue the policy of land-for-peace or face the end of normalising relations with Arab governments. Mr. Netanyahu told U.S. leaders in Washington this week that Israel would not turn over any more occupied land to Arabs and said the peace process should be based on security for peace. "Our reaction (to Mr. Netanyahu's comments) are in line with the political declaration from the Arab summit in Cairo," Mr. Abdullah said. Mr. Netanyahu infuriated Arab leaders by insisting

Jerusalem, the eastern part of which Israel occupied in 1967, would remain the Jewish state's eternal and undivided capital. An Arab diplomat, who asked to remain anonymous, said the eight countries would "take a communal decision towards the extremist policies" of Mr. Netanyahu. The Palestinian National Authority warned Saturday that the peace process was in danger and criticised the United States for its "pro-Israeli" position. "The peace process is in danger," Palestinian Finance Minister Zuhdi Nashashibi told reporters in response to Mr. Netanyahu's visit to Washington. "This danger is heightened by the lack of determination by the United States with regard to Israeli intransigence," Mr. Nashashibi said in Gaza City. The foreign ministers of Egypt and Syria, together with their counterparts from the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman — are gathering in Muscat to discuss the latest

Demonstrators hurl stones at PNA police

BETHLEHEM, West Bank (AP) — Dozens of demonstrators demanding the release of Islamic militants threw stones at Palestinian police outside a West Bank lockup Saturday and blocked a highway for more than an hour. Police broke up the protest, punching and showing demonstrators, many of them women. One man was thrown to the floor and beaten by several officers. The protesters want Palestinian security forces to release family members suspected of membership in Islamic militant groups. Some 900 supporters of the Hamas and Islamic Jihad groups were rounded up by Palestinian police this spring in response to four suicide bombings by Islamic militants in Israel between Feb. 25 and March 4. At the start of Saturday's protest, demonstrators set up stone roadblocks outside the Palestinian police headquarters in the autonomous town of Bethlehem. The protesters barred police vehicles from entering and leaving the compound and

also shut down the adjacent Bethlehem-Hebron road for more than an hour. Raising their fists and pictures of detained relatives, they chanted, "the answer is going to be in Tel Aviv." One of the four suicide bombings went off in Tel Aviv. Police initially stood by, but charged into the group when some of the demonstrators began throwing stones. An Associated Press reporter and an APTV cameraman were detained. The Palestinian National Authority has begun releasing some Islamic militants in recent weeks. However, Israel's new headline prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, reportedly intends to deliver a message to the Palestinian Authority next week that he will not ease the closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip if more detainees are freed. The closure, imposed Feb. 25, bars nearly 2 million Palestinians, including tens of thousands of workers, from entering Israel.

Lebanon sets dates for polls

BEIRUT (AP) — Parliamentary elections, the second since the end of Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war, will be held over five consecutive Sundays starting Aug. 18, the government announced Saturday. President Elias Hrawi endorsed the timetable under a new election law widely viewed as unfair to the country's dwindling Christian community, whose grip on power has been considerably curtailed after the civil war. The new 128-seat house will be elected in five rounds, one for each of Lebanon's five governorates. Voting begins in Mount Lebanon Aug. 18, followed by north Lebanon Aug. 25, Beirut Sept. 1, South Lebanon Sept. 8 and finally east Lebanon Sept. 15. The exact number of voters is not known, but they make up about 30 per cent of the four million population. Every Lebanese citizen who has completed his 21st year is an elector and qualifies for the franchise. A new election law passed Thursday dismayed many Christians and prompted some of their leaders to call for a boycott of the polls. Three Maronite Christian opposition leaders lashed out at the new election law in a joint communique Friday. Former President Amin Gemayel, former army commander Gen. Michel Aoun and right-wing politician Dory Chamoun said it was the "most dangerous forgery aimed at erasing the Lebanese homeland."

However, the Falange Party, the country's main right-wing Christian faction, said it will participate in the polls and named 13 candidates to run in various areas. (Continued on page 3)

Erbakan promises return home for Kurds

ELAZIG, Turkey (R) — Turkey's Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, visiting two eastern provinces on Saturday, promised return home for thousands of Kurdish villagers who have fled a 12-year battle between the army and rebel Kurds. "Whoever wants to return to their villages, we will repair their homes and settle them back to their home," Mr. Erbakan told a cheering crowd of mainly Kurdish-populated town Elazig. "We will stop this migration and develop animal breeding for livelihood and (you) will begin living in (your) villages and hamlets," he said in his address, often interrupted by the crowd who shouted "mucahit (holy warrior) Erbakan." More than 330,000 people, according to official figures, have left their homes to flee a fierce fighting between the army and

Industrialists sign contracts in Iraq

By Mervat Suwadeh Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — Head of a Jordanian industrial delegation which returned from Baghdad Thursday, said the group's one-week visit to Iraq succeeded in reaching an agreement with Iraqi officials on increasing Jordanian-Iraqi trade exchange which was slashed by 50 per cent six months ago. But Chairman of Jordan's Chamber of Industry Khalid Abu Hassan did not say whether the trade volume between the two countries will go back to its previous level of \$400 million annually. Mr. Abu Hassan said the 18-member team, which was seeking new deals with

Iraqi buyers following the signing of the oil-for-food deal with the United Nations, was able to secure several contracts to provide food and medical supplies for Iraq. "Many industrialists in the team have actually signed contracts while others were assured by Iraqi officials and suppliers that their products will have priority over others," Mr. Abu Hassan told the Jordan Times. He declined to provide other details on the deals. He said Iraqi officials also affirmed that the Red Sea Port of Aqaba will be the only port to receive Iraqi imports of food and medicine in addition to Iraq's Umm Qasr Port. Jordan's industrial sector, dealt a heavy blow in January when the government, citing mounting Iraqi debts, cut trade to just over \$200 million from \$400 million. Jordanian industrialists served as Iraq's main suppliers of food and medicine since 1990 when the United Nations imposed stringent economic sanctions on Iraq following its invasion of Kuwait. However, industrialists raised hopes to regain their lost market in Iraq following the signing of the oil-for-food deal in May 20. The deal allows Iraq to sell \$2 billion worth of oil over six months to buy food and medicine for its people. Mr. Abu Hassan asserted that last week's visit was

"up to the expectations" of the Kingdom's industrialists. "It was a very successful and fruitful visit and I can safely say that we got what we hoped for," Mr. Abu Hassan maintained. It was not immediately clear whether the new deals will be included in the Jordanian-Iraqi trade protocol under which Iraq provides the Kingdom with its needs for oil in return for food and medical supplies. Government officials have previously announced that the Jordanian private sector was free to seek deals with the country's eastern neighbour as long as the Central Bank of Jordan does not have to pay for exported goods.

Arafat to hold talks with Mubarak Sunday

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat will go to Cairo on Sunday for talks with President Hosni Mubarak ahead of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to Egypt, a Palestinian aide said on Saturday. "President Arafat's visit to Cairo is aimed at continuing consultations with President Mubarak on the future of the peace process in light of the recent developments in the region," Mr. Arafat's adviser Nabil Abu Rdaineh told Reuters. Mr. Netanyahu is due in Egypt on July 18 — his first trip to an Arab state since his election in May. He is also expected to visit Jordan next week. Palestinians want Mr. Netanyahu to continue implementing the PLO-Israel agreement, especially a promised troop redeployment from Hebron delayed by the previous Israeli government, and to continue

talks on the final status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The West Bank city of Hebron is the last of seven Palestinian towns to be handed to the Palestinian National Authority in line with a PLO-Israel accord. Last year, Israel redeployed from six major West Bank cities and nearby villages. Mr. Netanyahu has pledged to honour Israel's peace deals but PLO officials said since his election, that he has made no effort to personally contact the PLO leadership. Meanwhile, preparations are under way for a meeting between Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and Mr. Arafat later this month in Damascus, an Arab diplomat said in Cairo on Saturday. "Contacts have been made between Syrian officials and Arafat to set up a meeting in Damascus in late July with the Syrian president," said the diplomat, who asked not to be named.

Netanyahu 'ignorant' of Palestinians — League

CAIRO (AFP) — The Arab League Saturday slammed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as "ignorant" for implying Palestinians were just a minority who do not deserve a state. "Whoever says that is either ignorant or ignores the truth," Deputy Secretary General Said Kamal said in response to the comments made Friday by Mr. Netanyahu in a speech to Jewish leaders in New York. Netanyahu, when asked about his response to the

"national aspirations" of the Palestinians, said if all nations took account of their minorities' demands there would be "182 more nations" in the world, or double the current number. "The Palestinian people totals seven million persons at home and abroad," Mr. Kamal told journalists in Cairo. "The exaggerations which Netanyahu has made in the United States aim to make public opinion there ignorant of the true situation," he added. (Continued on page 3)

Christian warlord acquitted in church bombing

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — A court Saturday acquitted Samir Geagea, once Lebanon's most feared Christian militia leader, of masterminding a 1994 church bombing that killed 11 worshippers and wounded 60.

The verdict capped a two-year trial that stirred Christian-Muslim tension in a country still struggling to recover from the devastating 1975-1990 civil war.

Mr. Geagea already had been given two death sentences for the separate 1990 murders of Christian rivals who challenged his control of Lebanon's Christian heartland during the civil war. But the court Saturday commuted those sentences to life imprisonment.

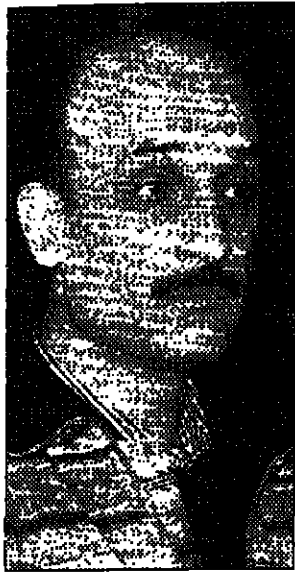
The five-judge Judicial Council, Lebanon's highest court, also cleared Mr. Geagea of working to overthrow the government.

However, it sentenced the 45-year-old former militia leader to 10 years imprisonment for establishing "military factions" after the government disbanded other Christian and Muslim militias, and two years for arms possession.

Under the Lebanese system, verdicts and sentences are pronounced at the same time.

Mr. Geagea, the former commander of the now-disbanded Lebanese forces militia, and other defendants were not at the court when Chief Justice Philip Khairallah pronounced the 125-page summation of the verdict.

The prosecutor, Adnan Addoum, had demanded the death sentence for Mr.



Lebanese troops form a tight security cordon around the Palace of Justice on the former Green Line in Beirut as Lebanon's highest court pronounced former Christian warlord Samir Geagea (photo top) innocent on Saturday of a 1994 church bombing which killed 11 people (Reuters photo)

Geagea and several senior aides in the Feb. 27, 1994 bombing of Notre Dame de la Delivrance Church in the Christian port city of Jounieh north of Beirut.

Mr. Addoum accused the former Christian warlord of plotting to thwart Lebanon's recovery from the civil war.

He said Mr. Geagea, a Maronite Catholic, engineered the bombing to create a chaotic climate to help rekindle war and proclaim a breakaway Christian mini-state.

Mr. Geagea was convicted last summer of engineer-



ing the murder of rival Christian politician Danny Chamoun, his half-German wife and two sons at their home in suburban Baabda east of Beirut on Oct. 23, 1990.

In another trial, Mr. Geagea was found guilty of ordering the Jan. 19, 1990, murder of Elias Zayek, who headed a rival faction of the right-wing Christian Falange Party.

Mr. Geagea pleaded innocent to the murders and to the church bombing, contending his prosecution was politically motivated to avenge his opposition to

Lebanon's post-war Syrian-backed government. He had twice refused a cabinet post.

Mr. Geagea is the only militia chief to have been convicted of crimes committed during the civil war, in which more than 150,000 people perished.

Other Christian and Muslim militia leaders effectively were pardoned, and some now are cabinet ministers in Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's government.

The slim, balding Geagea has been held in a defence ministry prison for more than two years.

Mr. Geagea still has some support among right-wing Maronites, but they have little strength and are not considered a major threat to post-war stability.

Just before the verdict was announced, army troops in full combat gear fanned out in Christian east Beirut and the Christian heartland to the north to prevent possible trouble by Mr. Geagea supporters.

Soldiers, backed by tanks and armoured personnel carriers, manned checkpoints in east Beirut to search for gunmen and weapons. No arrests were

reported.

In other verdicts, the court Saturday acquitted Mr. Geagea's chief of staff, Col. Fuad Malek, of involvement in the church bombing. But it sentenced him to 1 1/2 years in prison for helping in the formation of "military factions."

It sentenced another defendant, Jerjes Khoury, to life imprisonment "for plotting the (church) bombing and killing innocent people."

Three other Geagea aides were sentenced to death in absentia. Another two were acquitted for lack of evidence.

Cyprus welcomes Lebanon ceasefire monitoring chair

NICOSIA (R) — Cyprus expressed hope on Saturday that its selection as the base of a Lebanon truce monitoring group would improve the climate in the Middle East and have an impact in resolving the island's own long standing dispute.

"It is definitely a move forward," Cyprus's Foreign Minister Alecos Michaelides told Reuters, adding that the Mediterranean island had in the past offered to host Arab-Israeli peace talks.

The truce monitoring, to be undertaken by the United States, France, Israel, Syria and Lebanon, is seen as a potentially important vehicle for bringing Israel and Syria into contact during a time when their broader peace negotiations is unclear.

"It is a good development for the whole region. If the peace process continues and concludes it will create a new climate conducive to political and economic cooperation...and a positive climate for achieving a solution to the Cyprus problem," the minister said.

The island has been partitioned since 1974 when Turkish troops seized the

northern third of the island in response to a short lived Greek coup in Nicosia engineered by the military then ruling Greece.

The agreement, reached on Friday, sets up the five-nation monitoring group, based in the South Lebanese border town of Naqura. It would check compliance with the April 27 ceasefire that ended a 17-day Israeli blitz against Hizbollah guerrillas in Lebanon. About 200 Lebanese civilians were killed and 400 injured and about 50 Israelis were wounded in the fighting.

The chair based on the island will operate 24 hours to receive complaints of ceasefire violations. It will also organise meetings of the monitoring group, composed of military representatives, to decide within 72 hours how to handle the complaints.

The truce, which was negotiated by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, bans the targeting of civilians by either side but allows combatants the right of retaliation.

It does not cover guerrilla attacks on Israeli forces occupying a border strip in South Lebanon.

France warns Israel of cooler ties if peace process stops

The Jerusalem Post

PARIS — France will lower the level of its relations with Israel if the Middle East peace process is stopped, French Defence Minister Charles Millon has said.

Mr. Millon said he is postponing his official visit to Israel, scheduled for July 21, since this visit coincided with an unprogrammed visit by Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette, who is to tour the region at the request of President Jacques Chirac for discussions on the state of the peace process.

His comments were the second sign this week of an apparent cooling in relations between France and Israel.

The French Foreign Ministry had said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was expected to visit Paris this month. But the Israeli embassy said no such visit was planned for the moment.

Speaking to the France-Israel Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Millon said that Mr. De Charette will examine with the Israelis "the future of the peace process, and the relations between Israel and France in the

framework of that process. It is unthinkable that the peace process be stopped, although a change in (negotiating) method or in the process is conceivable."

He said the continuation and expansion of defence cooperation between Israel and France will depend on the political situation in the Middle East.

Two years ago, France and Israel signed a cooperation agreement, providing for regular meetings and exchanges, thus putting an end to the military embargo imposed after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

"There was a difficult period in the relations between France and Israel, the period of the embargo. Today we're moving out of that period, but to be able to stabilise (defence) cooperation, there must be a stabilisation of the political situation in the Middle East."

"I could well understand that for reasons of independence and strategic interests, the Israelis might not want to enter into partnership agreements that are liable to be suspended in the light of the political situation," he said.

Polisario threatens to resume W. Sahara war

PARIS (R) — The leader of Polisario Front, which seeks independence for Western Sahara from Morocco, has threatened to resume war unless the United Nations implements a deadlocked peace plan.

Mohammad Abdul Aziz, in remarks carried by the Algerian newspaper Al Salam on Saturday, said U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali had told him he was considering launching a new initiative on Western Sahara.

"If it turns out that the Security Council and the secretary-general fail to assume their responsibilities and fail to enforce observance of the U.N. peace plan in the Moroccan part of Western Sahara, then the only course of action that remains for Saharans is to resume the fight to defend their right to self-determination and independence," he said.

A ceasefire monitored by U.N. observers halted a guerrilla war in the former Spanish colony between Polisario fighters and Moroccan

troops in 1991.

The Security Council voted in May to suspend voter registration in Western Sahara for a long-delayed referendum on the territory's future and to trim the 330-member U.N. monitoring force.

These actions were recommended by Dr. Ghali because of continuing disagreement between Morocco and Polisario over who should be eligible to vote in the referendum, originally set for January 1992.

The vote is to decide whether Western Sahara should be incorporated into Morocco, which controls most of the territory, or become an independent state as sought by Polisario, whose self-proclaimed republic is recognised by some 70 countries.

"Morocco is blocking every move. Morocco wants to transform the U.N. peace plan into nothing more than a monitoring of the ceasefire," Mr. Abdul Aziz said.

'Afghan peace process still on track'

KABUL (AFP) — Afghanistan's nascent peace process is still on track, despite the refusal of two major opposition groups to join the Kabul government, a top presidential official said Saturday.

"The peace process we have launched will forge ahead because that is the will of our people," presidential spokesman Abdul Aziz Murad told AFP.

"We see a dark future for the enemies of peace and no group, including the Taliban, has any option but to accept peace, whether they do so tomorrow or later," he added.

Mr. Murad's comments came after the Taliban militia, which has been besieging Kabul for nine months, reportedly again rejected an offer to join the expanding administration here or to discuss peace with it.

The Taliban leadership in the southern city of Kandahar reportedly said it would not talk to President Burhanuddin Rabbani or his government as they had "broken promises" and were "responsible for the suffering of the Afghan people."

The Islamic warriors' steadfast refusal to negotiate came just two weeks after former opposition chief Gulbuddin Hekmatyar joined the government as premier, apparently prompting other leaders of warring factions to consider following suit.

But last week, Yunus Khalis, chief of a powerful neutral group based in the eastern city of Jalalabad, also rejected speculation that he was negotiating a place for himself and his group in the Kabul government.

Mr. Khalis said in a statement received in the western Pakistani city of Peshawar that he had never asked for nor considered a government post, adding that he was against a party-based system of government.

But Mr. Murad said Saturday that talks were continuing between Mr. Rabbani's government and Mr. Khalis on his joining the government.

"Contacts are still underway between our two groups," and we remain optimistic about the possible outcome," he said.

The new coalition government is desperately trying to woo northern warlord General Abdul Rasheed Dostum and Shiite Muslim leader Karim Khalili's Hezb-e-Wahdat faction into the administration.

Mr. Hekmatyar said Wednesday he was planning a trip in the "near future" to Gen. Dostum's northern territory as well as to the Wahdat base in the central province of Bamyan to hold talks with them on joining the Kabul coalition.

He said his condition for going to Bamyan was that Mr. Khalili would return to Kabul with him for talks, but refused to say when the trip would take place.

Mr. Hekmatyar said progress was being made

with the two groups and said he was "very hopeful" of the outcome.

Afghanistan's former Mujahideen resistance groups have been locked in a bloody battle for power and influence since the last communist government here fell four years ago.

No single group has been able to gain sole control of the whole country, prompting groups such as Mr. Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami and Mr. Rabbani's Jamiat-e-Islami to enter alliances aimed at ending fighting and thwarting the Taliban.

But observers here remain wary of how solid and long-lasting any of the new unions will prove to be.

"It depends very much on whether the individual factional leaders get the long-term power, influence and status that they are seeking," one Afghan analyst said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 73111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:05.....Cartoon — The Mask
15:30.....Bush School
15:40.....Mac & Muley
16:10.....Olympics
17:00.....News Flash
17:02.....Sciences Cartoon
17:15.....La Vie Devant Moi
17:30.....Pyramide
18:00.....Envoy Special
19:00.....Le Journal
19:15.....Sports et Musique
19:30.....News Headlines
19:35.....Cinema, Cinema
20:00.....The American Cart Show
20:45.....Fresh Prince of Bel-Air
21:10.....Blackie's Magic
22:00.....News in English
22:25.....Film: "Guitar Legends"
23:15.....Short Story Cinema
23:45.....Nelson's Column

PRAYER TIMES

04:02.....Fajr
05:35.....(Sunrise) Duha
12:41.....Dhuhr
16:22.....Asr
19:48.....Maghreb
21:21.....Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swetish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Tel. 73111-19

Church of the Annunciation

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Armenian International Church Tel. 652526
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.
Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

WEATHER

Temperatures are expected to rise slightly becoming around average with winds northwesterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate to active and seas calm.

Min/Max. temp.
Amman.....18/31
Aqaba.....25/38
Deserts.....16/36

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Bassam Karadshah759200
Dr. Ramzi Mazzawi894788
Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad846070
Salman Daboubi776751
Firas pharmacy661912
Ferdows pharmacy778336
Al Asema pharmacy637055
Nairoukh pharmacy623672
Al Salam pharmacy636730
Yacoub pharmacy644945
Shmeisani pharmacy637660
Najib pharmacy847632
IRBID:
Dr. Ghazi Ta'ammeh250080
Al Quds pharmacy(—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Samir Al Lawzi989601
Khalifeh pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre.....637111
Civil Defence Department.....661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue.....630341

AMMAN:

Husseini Medical Centre81381332
Khalidi Maternity6428116
Akileh Maternity6424412
Jabal Amman Maternity642362
Malhas, J. Amman636140
Palestine, Shmeisani607071
Shmeisani Hospital669131
University Hospital845845

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

HAZRA:

Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 08 (53700)

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
09:15.....Dhahran (add) (RJ)
09:30.....Jeddah (RJ)
10:05.....Riyadh (RJ)
10:10.....Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:50.....Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
11:40.....Larnaca, Beirut (RJ)
14:05.....New York (RJ)
18:00.....Paris (RJ)
18:25.....Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:50.....London (RJ)
19:15.....Athens (RJ)
19:25.....Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
19:30.....Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
20:30.....Tunis (RJ)
20:30.....Brussels, Vienna (RJ)
20:55.....Frankfurt, Brussels (RJ)
22:40.....Rome (RJ)
01:10.....Cairo (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
04:00.....Riyadh (add) (RJ)
06:10.....Madrid (RJ)
06:35.....Beirut, Brussels (RJ)
09:00.....Frankfurt (RJ)
12:00.....Tunis (RJ)
12:15.....Vienna, Rome (RJ)
12:15.....Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
12:30.....Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
13:25.....London (RJ)
21:10.....Cairo (RJ)
21:20.....New Delhi (RJ)
21:20.....Jeddah (RJ)
21:45.....Damascus (RJ)
22:20.....Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:45.....Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
23:50.....Bangkok (RJ)
23:45.....Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights

06:30.....Tel Aviv (LY)
12:30.....Doha (Q7)
13:40.....Bahrain (GF)
15:05.....Moscow (SU)
16:30.....Dubai (EK)
20:35.....Cairo (MS)
21:10.....Beirut (ME)
22:15.....London, Beirut (BA)
23:20.....Istanbul (TK)
23:30.....Athens (OA)
01:20.....Amsterdam, Beirut (KL)
02:30.....Belgrade (GU)

ROYAL WINGS (RW) Flights

10:00 Amman (arriving at Marka Airport from QAIA) (RW)
20:30.....Aqaba (RW)

HAJIAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apricot800/500
Apple700/500
Banana600/600
Banana (mukhammar)520/520
Banana (imported)830/600
Cabbage210/140
Carrot130/80
Cauliflower220/160
Cucumber (large)140/80
Cucumber (small)240/140
Eggplant200/120
Garlic650/400
Lemon680/450
Marrow (large)200/120
Marrow (small)330/200
Mulukhiyah150/100
Onion (dry)130/80
Okra750/500
Orange400/300
Plum330/200
Peach380/250
Pepper (hot)670/400
Pepper (sweet)340/220
Pepper (sweet)320/220
Potato270/180
String Bean360/250

Lebanon sets for polls

(Continued from page 1)

Independent Christian Lebanese would head a boycott call, despite their rejection of the election law. They said they would seek election and try to push for "the desired changes from within the system."

The law was tailor-made to ensure the election in Lebanon's central mountains and his allies at the expense of Christian candi-



HRH Crown Prince Hassan (photo top) with the delegation (Pera photo)

Jordan, Lebanon exchange at

AMMAN (R) — Officially from Jordan and Lebanon Tuesday will meet in Beirut to discuss economic and trade ties and a new plan for upgrading the trade protocol intended to boost Jordan's exports to Lebanon, according to a member of the preparatory committee to the meeting.

Mr. Lawzi, who is also general manager of the Agricultural Marketing Organization (AMO), said last week Lebanon sold Jordan 125 million worth of its products while Jordan exported JD 24.2 million worth to Lebanon. In view of this trade balance, Jordan will look

King sup

(Continued from page 1)

den by the government will be a new beginning for a process of reform and development that Jordan has seen all it is supposed to do to its economy on track, which will enable it to foreign assistance.

Mr. Kabarti told the assembly that the country is a result of the rise in the cost of wheat in the international markets, which the budget did not allocate sufficient funds to cover the extra cost.

He said that the country is implementing its economic reform programme and, accordingly, economic assistance was forthcoming from different sources to help Jordan restructure its economy. He said foreign countries have been committed to helping Jordan achieve self-reliance and self-sufficiency despite its scarce resources.

"We want to put behind the idea of subsidy, an idea that is no more acceptable in the world, and we want to find a substitution for it," said the prime minister, adding that "if we convert direct subsidy of food to subsidy to the wages of the people, we would be moving towards self-reliance."

The King stressed that the Kingdom has the support of the international community in its pursuit of comprehensive Middle East peace.

Lebanon sets for polls

(Continued from page 1)

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Home News



HRH Crown Prince Hassan Saturday meets with members of Jordan's Olympic team. The delegation will head for Atlanta Sunday. See story page 11 (Petra photo)

Jordan, Lebanon to discuss trade exchange at Beirut meeting

AMMAN (J.T.) — Officials from Jordan and Lebanon Tuesday will meet in Beirut to discuss economic and trade ties and prospects for upgrading a 1992 trade protocol intended to boost Jordan's exports to Lebanon, according to a member of the preparatory committee to the meeting, Salem Lawzi.

Dr. Lawzi, who is also director general of the Agricultural Marketing Organisation (AMO), said last year Lebanon sold Jordan JD28.9 million worth of its national products while Jordan exported JD 24.2 million worth to Lebanon.

In view of this trade imbalance, Jordan will look for an increase in exports to the Lebanese side, he said.

The committee is scheduled to start its meetings in Beirut Sunday to prepare for a ministerial meeting that would be co-chaired by Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb and his Lebanese counterpart Yassin Jabr, said Dr. Lawzi.

Among the topics for discussion, he said, are the obstacles to trade, issues connected with an existing land transport agreement signed by Jordan and Lebanon last year, and facilitating the issuing of visas by the Lebanese authorities to Jordanians.

Dr. Lawzi said that since agricultural products exchanges account for a major sector of trade exchange, the two sides will seek to augment this sector of trade by convening a special meeting of their respective agricultural ministers.

The preparatory committee to the Beirut meeting Sunday is chaired by Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary General Mohammad Bani Hani and includes representatives of the ministries of Interior and Transport, as well as the Jordanian chambers of industry and trade.

CSC pledges to fill job vacancies

AMMAN (Petra) — At a Civil Service Commission (CSC) board meeting on Saturday CSC President Abdullah Olayyan confirmed that government job vacancies are to be filled as soon as possible. He added that all applications will be treated fairly, and appointments will follow a chronological order on a first-come-first-served basis.

Last week, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti had urged the CSC to take immediate steps to fill government job vacancies for posts created in the 1996 fiscal budget.

Mr. Kabariti had stressed that compliance with regulations regarding the appointment of employees was of the utmost importance.

After the board meeting, the CSC issued its 1995 report on job allocations.

According to the report, a total of 124,187 applications were received for 5,291 vacancies in government departments, over half of which were available in the Ministry of Education.

A total of 395 positions were granted to applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds, including needy families, sons and daughters of army martyrs and handicapped people. National and international CSC training scholarships were awarded to 636 government employees, and 216 employees attended training seminars organised by the CSC.

Sponge, plastics factories switch to environment-friendly equipment

AMMAN (J.T.) — In compliance with international environmental protection protocols, five Jordanian firms have switched from using ozone-damaging machinery to new equipment designed to reduce the use of chloro-fluorocarbons which are replaced by the less harmful methylene chloride.

Ghazi Oudat, deputy director of the ozone-saving project at the General Corporation for Environmental Protection (GCEP), said that the World Bank was providing financial assistance which would enable the firms to make the switch.

The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment last November signed an agreement with local industrial firms which produce plastic and sponge to substitute harmful materials with ozone-friendly substances.

Furthermore, the ministry announced that under the 1987 Montreal Protocol for the protection of the environment, which Jordan signed in 1989, pledging to introduce the necessary changes by the end of the year 2010, the Kingdom has received \$2.5 million from the World Bank for the conversion purpose.

The firms, said Mr. Oudat, are given 12 months to abide by the regulations.

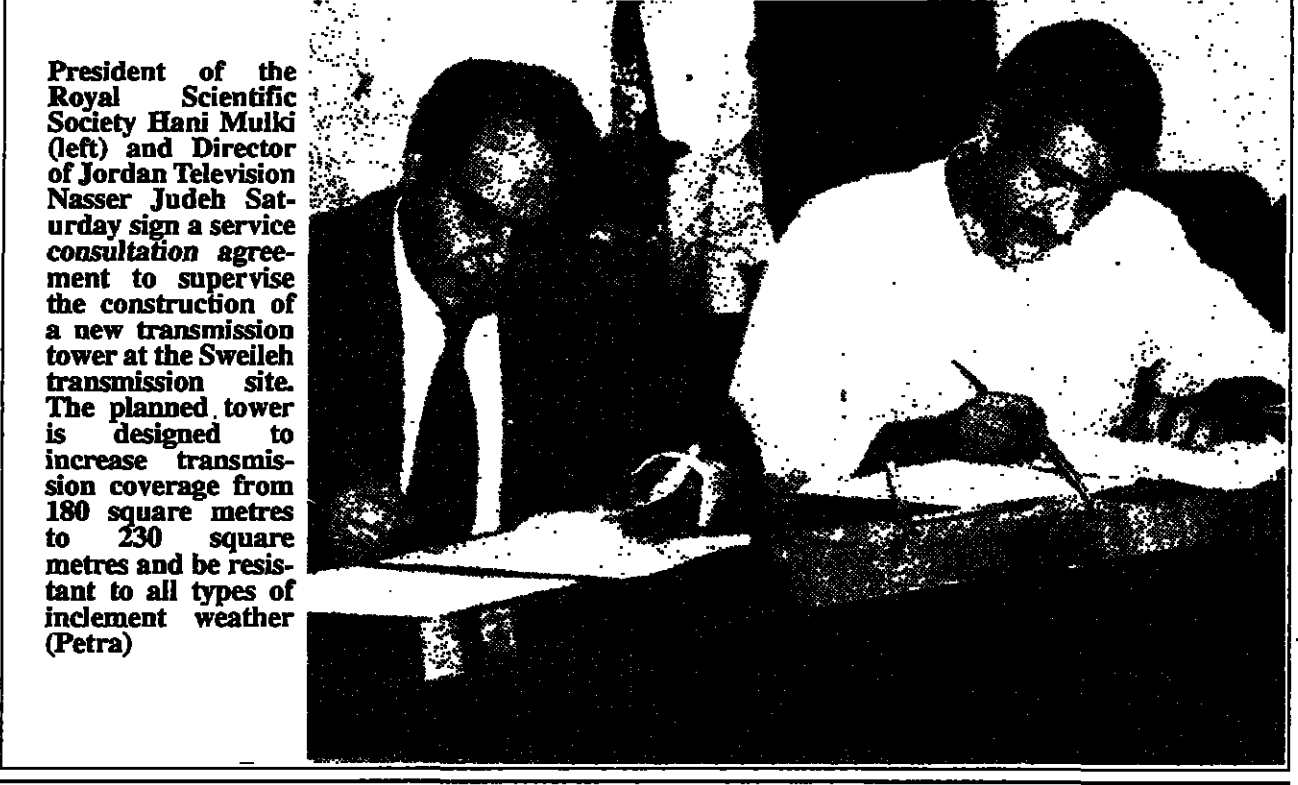
Also, Mr. Oudat said that his office has conducted a general survey of all the firms and factories that use ozone-depleting substances including those which manufacture air conditioners, refrigerators, sponges and plastics, and found that, combined, they annually consume 800 tonnes of substances harmful to the ozone layer.

He said that his office has made arrangements for them to receive financial assistance from the Montreal Fund.

Meanwhile, according to Misbah Eshnaneh, general manager of the National Sponge Factory, the quality and amount of production at his factory will not be affected by the change of equipment and substance.

To the contrary, he said, the new machines will produce 175 kilograms a minute up from 100 kilos by the old equipment and substances.

He added that the price of sponge sold in the market will not be affected nor will the numbers of factory workers be reduced as a result of the changes.



President of the Royal Scientific Society Hani Mulki (left) and Director of Jordan Television Nasser Judeh Saturday sign a service consultation agreement to supervise the construction of a new transmission tower at the Sweileh transmission site. The planned tower is designed to increase transmission coverage from 180 square metres to 230 square metres and be resistant to all types of inclement weather (Petra)

King supports

(Continued from page 1)

King Hussein said that the government will be a new beginning for the process of reform and will show that Jordan has done all it is supposed to do to put its economy on track, which will entitle it to foreign assistance.

Mr. Kabariti told the audience that the country faces a heavy financial burden as a result of the rise in the cost of wheat in the international markets, adding that the budget did not allocate sufficient funds to cover the extra cost.

He said that the country is implementing its economic reform programme and, accordingly, economic assistance was forthcoming from different sources to help Jordan restructure its economy. He said foreign countries have been committed to helping Jordan which they "consider model of a country trying to achieve self-reliance and self-sufficiency despite its meagre resources."

"We want to put behind the idea of subsidy, an idea that is no more acceptable to the world, and we want to find a substitution for subsidy," said the prime minister, adding that "if we convert direct subsidy of bread to subsidy to the wages of the people, we would be moving towards self-reliance."

The King stressed that the Kingdom has the support of the international community in its pursuit of comprehensive Middle East peace.

Court orders release of Shbeilat aide

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — An activist opposed to normalisation of ties with Israel who was Thursday sentenced to nine-months imprisonment on charges of distributing statements slandering the King will be released within a week, legal sources said Saturday.

The lawyer of Imad Ghanem, the secretary of the Society to Combat Zionism and Normalisation which is headed by President of Engineers Association Leith Shbeilat, who was sentenced to three years imprisonment in March on charges of lese majeste, said his client will be released Wednesday after spending eight months in detention.

The court has the legal right to reduce a sentence by a period equivalent to that the detainee spends in jail awaiting trial.

Mr. Ghanem was arrested on Dec. 30, 1995 and first received an 18-month sentence by the State Security Court. The court tribunal reduced the sentence because Mr. Ghanem confessed in court to distributing the statements.

The charge that was pressed by the state prosecutor against Mr. Ghanem was distributing the written lecture of his boss, Mr. Shbeilat, which the court considered slanderous to the King, and which was the evidence used in convicting Mr. Shbeilat of the same slander.

Mr. Ghanem was arrested three weeks following the arrest of Mr. Shbeilat on Dec. 8, an independent Islamist and an opposition leader, who surrendered to authorities in his office after being accused of slandering King Hussein, Her Majesty Queen Noor and HRH Crown Prince Hassan.

On March 18, Mr. Shbeilat, who is also president of the Jordan Engineers Association, was convicted and was sentenced to three-years imprisonment.

Two years ago, Mr. Shbeilat was tried and convicted of plotting against the regime. He was sentenced to death, but the sentence was reduced to life imprisonment. He was released the same month when the King issued a general pardon.

WHAT'S GOING ON

LECTURE

"Mishnah and Nabatean at Wadi Al-Thamir" by Professor Michel Daviau at the American Centre of Oriental Research (ACOR) at 7:00 pm (Tel. 246-117)

EXHIBITIONS

"Abstract Plastic" art by Samar Saba and Nadia Awad at the Peace in the Eyes of the Youth at the Royal Cultural Centre. Also displaying work on national heritage by Yeha Charitable Society until July 15.

"Korean Products Fair '96" at the World Exhibition Centre, University Road, until July 15.

"Exhibition of works by Sudanese artist Rashid Mubarek" at the House of Culture, at Dar al-Funun, Jarama, until July 15.

"Exhibition of works by contemporary Arab artists" until July 15.

Ministers take tough stand

(Continued from page 1)

developments in the Gulf and Middle East.

It is the first meeting of the eight signatories to the Damascus Declaration, designed to promote Arab unity, since December last year.

Terrorism was also expected to top the agenda.

"The problem of terrorism and the future of the peace process in the Middle East will dominate the work" of the ministers, the Egyptian ambassador in Muscat, Mahmoud Hussein Abdul Nabi, told AFP.

"The ministers will also examine Arab-Iranian relations and the problem of Iraq," said Mr. Abdul Nabi.

He said the ministers would also look at "ways to put into action the common Arab action document" adopted during the last meeting in Damascus but held back from publication pending approval from their governments.

The document paved the way for greater economic, security and military cooperation between the eight countries.

The Damascus Declaration was drawn up after the 1991 Gulf war to compensate Egypt and Syria for taking part in the multinational military operation that drove Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

Although the document has not been implemented, the eight foreign ministers still meet from time to time to coordinate foreign policy. The latest meeting, comes after last month's bombing of a U.S. military compound at Al Khobar in Saudi Arabia which killed 19 U.S. airmen, and an increasingly bitter war of words between Arab and Israeli leaders over the peace process.

The Saudi foreign minister is to brief his counterparts on the Al Khobar attack during a discussion on terrorism, officials said.

All eight signatories of the Damascus Declaration have condemned the bombing, although the U.S. State Department on Monday refused to clear Syria of any involvement in the attack.

Visiting Algerian minister tours medical facilities

AMMAN (Petra) — Algerian Minister of Health Yahya Qaidoum, who has been holding talks with his Jordanian counterpart Aref Bataineh on Jordanian-Algerian health cooperation, Saturday visited Al Bashir government hospital and met its director Mohammad Awad who outlined the hospital's services.

Accompanied by Dr. Bataineh and other ministry officials, the Algerian minister also toured Al Amal Cancer Centre near the University of Jordan, a pharmaceutical firm in Salt, the Royal Medical Services and the Amman Surgical Hospital.

Dr. Bataineh was quoted as telling the Algerian minister that Jordan's government hospitals can offer Algerian citizens free medical treatment in line with a bilateral agreement on health affairs.

Dr. Qaidoum, who arrived in Amman last Wednesday, was earlier received by His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and discussed bilateral cooperation in health fields.

Two workmen die in cesspool accident

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Two people were killed Saturday in a cesspool accident in the Wadi Abdoun area of Amman, according to Civil Defence Department (CDD) officials.

The accident occurred when two Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) employees were cleaning a clogged cesspool in the Muhajerin area, Lieutenant Colonel Tayel Huneiti of the CDD said.

One of the employees descended down the 6-metre-deep sewer, and "when he removed the stones and dirt that were clogging the channel, water gushed through and pushed him inside the cesspool."

"The other worker who was standing on the steps of the cesspool opening tried to rescue his co-worker, but he was carried into the sewage," the CDD official said.

It took CDD frogmen one hour to retrieve both bodies from the cesspool network.

"The sewage level kept rising to nearly five-metres. We had to pump for about half an hour to just find the bodies," said Lt. Col. Huneiti.

He identified the deceased as Ibrahim Jabri Yousef, 28, and Yousef Sayes, 50, both Jordanians.

The CDD official told the Jordan Times that the victims ignored safety procedures. Lt. Col. Huneiti said he called for a meeting with the WAJ to coordinate further precautionary measures in order to avoid "similar tragic accidents."

"I informed WAJ officials that in the future the CDD will be willing to send a rescue unit to stand by when the water authority intends to clean cesspools," he said.

SOIR-IM- The Swedish Organization for Individual Relief

Will start a project of integration of its services for severely mentally retarded children, youngsters and grown-ups into the community according to the principles of Community Based Approach, CBA. The present activities at SOIR Sweileh which will be integrated consists of pre-school, training-school, vocational training-center and sheltered workshop. Therefore we are looking for a

Project Leader of the integration project

- Qualifications:**
- * Experience of work with persons with mental retardation
 - * Well acquainted with CBA.
 - * Experience of budget work.
 - * Good written and spoken English.
 - * Minimum of 2 years University Studies in Social Sciences, or similar field.
- The work needs an inventive person with power of initiative and ability to co-operate.
- Duration of project:** 2 years- prolongation possible.
- Duties to begin on September 1st, 1996, or by agreement, trial period.**
- Applications in writing, with references not later than July 31, 1996, to**
- SOIR, P.O.Box 2378, Amman 11181

Lebanon sets dates for polls

(Continued from page 1)

Independent Christian politicians said they would not heed a boycott call, despite their rejection of the election law. They said they would seek election and try to push for "the desired changes from within the system."

The law was tailor-made to ensure the election in Lebanon's central mountains of Druze leader Walid Jumblatt and his allies at the expense of Christian candidates.

Maronites oppose the law because it divided mount Lebanon — the heartland of their community — into six electoral districts, at least two of which have Druze majorities.

In Lebanon's first post-war elections in 1992, Christians boycotted the polls to protest the continued military presence of 40,000 Syrian troops in Lebanon.

The current half-Christian, half-Muslim parliament is packed with supporters of Syria.

Week of riots in Northern Ireland claims first fatality

BELFAST (R) — A week of riots in Northern Ireland claimed their first death Saturday when a man died of injuries received in the worst unrest in Londonderry for years.

Circumstances surrounding the death were not immediately known but Martin McGuinness, a negotiator for the IRA's political wing, Sinn Féin, said he believed the man was struck by a British army jeep.

"What I have heard is that he was run over by a British army landrover," he told Reuters.

"I don't know the full circumstances. This is only a preliminary report...but I am presently trying to ascertain the exact circumstances," he added.

The fatality occurred in the

worst rioting in Northern Ireland's second city for years. Almost 1,000 petrol bombs were thrown at police and troops in Catholic demonstrations against the holding of Protestant Orange Order parades.

Irish Republican gunmen fighting British rule of Northern Ireland shot at a Belfast police station three times during the night and police returned fire. No injuries were reported.

There was no claim of responsibility for the shooting, which marked a serious escalation of a steadily worsening situation across the province against a background of the worst Catholic protests for more than two decades.

Some residents said they thought the shooting was

the work of the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), a radical offshoot of the mainstream IRA.

The IRA has not launched attacks in Northern Ireland itself since breaking a 17-month ceasefire in February with a bombing campaign in Britain and Europe to force concessions from Britain for Sinn Féin's entry into multi-party peace talks.

Police said they were having trouble keeping track of hundreds of clashes as groups of Catholics rioted across the British province in protest at a police reversal of a ban on a Protestant Orange Order parade in Portadown Thursday.

"It's absolutely crazy," said a police spokesman. Mobs roamed Belfast streets setting light to make-

shift barricades to draw in police and pelt them with petrol bombs and stones.

Three policemen who were shot Friday, victims of the first sniper attack by Republican gunmen in Northern Ireland for 23 months, were recovering, police said.

The violence has dealt a severe blow to efforts to end 27 years of bloody sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland, and brought relations between Ireland and Britain — partners in the peace process — to new lows.

Irish Prime Minister John Bruton Friday accused Britain of bowing to pressure by allowing Thursday's march by members of the hardline Orange Order in Portadown, south of Belfast, after four nights of riots by Protestants.

He accused Britain of treating nationalist pro-Irish Catholics more harshly than the province's Protestant majority. Asked if he blamed Britain for the rioting, he said: "Yes I do."

Britain's Northern Ireland secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew, angrily rejected Mr. Bruton's claims as "offensive."

"By accusing the government of yielding to pressure he is disbelieving the chief constable and he is disbelieving, for what it is worth, myself," said Sir Patrick.

"I find that offensive and I find it extraordinary."

Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams said: "The peace process lies in absolute ruins. And the responsibility for that — and for restoring it — lies with (British Prime Minister) John Major."



A burned out car smolders Saturday after a night of sporadic disturbances following the climax of the Loyalist marching season. In contrast Derry erupted in chaos as police and army units came under sustained petrol bombings last night (Reuters photo)

Vancouver conference ends with message linking AIDS and poverty

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (R) — The theme of the AIDS conference that just ended here was "one world, one hope," but for the first time, the delegates and scientists woke up to the fact that as far as AIDS is concerned, there are two worlds, one without much hope.

Drugs can now buy time. Not everyone can buy the drugs.

But to Dr. Peter Piot, head of the Geneva-based UNAIDS, a wake-up call, however belated, paves the way for action.

"I was surprised it happened now — the differences between the developed and the developing world, with HIV and other diseases, are not a new phenomenon," he told Reuters in an interview this week.

"But that awareness is giving us momentum now, and we don't want to lose it," said Dr. Piot, adding that negotiations for price cuts and bulk sales have already started between some AIDS-struck nations like Brazil and certain big pharmaceutical companies, which he did not identify.

"I'm not asking them to sell them for less than it costs to make it, including the research," he said. "I'm not Don Quixote."

The new drug regimes hold out the hope of longer and healthier lives for peo-

ple living with AIDS. But they also cost around \$15,000 a year, underscoring the gap between rich countries and poor.

Dr. Piot is encouraging clinical trials and "compassionate access" programmes in poor countries, where 90 per cent of the nearly 22 million HIV-infected people live. Both would help people with AIDS get some access to cutting-edge therapies as well as to more affordable medicine for the painful and debilitating "opportunistic infections" that plague them.

Noting that there are many slightly different strains of HIV around the world, experts say international research makes sense scientifically as well as morally.

"The virus spread and adaptation is independent of geographic borders," said Deborah Birk of the U.S. Walter Reed Army Institute. "HIV research must be global."

From a scientific point of view, the conference highlights were laboratory findings that have led doctors to believe that they may actually be able to conquer the complex and mercurial virus that until now has always changed and mutated to stay a step ahead of them.

From a human point of

view, no-one at the conference embodied the chasm between breakthroughs in a lab and the cold realities of life with AIDS better than Katherine Nyirenda, a 24-year-old HIV-infected mother of two who travelled here from Lusaka, Zambia.

"One world, one hope? It (hope) is out for me," she said. "Do not give the tests — if you do not give the treatment."

Moved by her plight and chastised when she pointed out that she could feed her children to adulthood for the price of her airfare here, people in her audience took up a collection for her. But conference organisers pleaded with them to remember that there were millions of Katherine Nyirendas around the world.

It would cost billions to get them anti-viral and protease inhibitor drugs. But researchers noted that there are some affordable weapons against a scourge that is infecting 8,500 people each day.

"Every one of those 8,500 infections is avoidable with safe and cheap means," said Dr. Michael Rekart, one of the conference co-chairs.

The conference also heard urgent calls for more work on a vaccine, particularly one that will work on the types of HIV common in Asia and Africa.

Colombo on alert for suicide bombings as troops pressure rebels

COLOMBO (AFP) — The Sri Lankan capital was placed on red alert Saturday amid fears of a Tamil Tiger suicide bombing campaign as the army pressured rebels with a jungle offensive in the island's east, officials said.

Police uncovered a 100-kilogramme bomb that was to be rigged inside a van apparently being prepared for a suicide bomber of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a police spokesman said.

The discovery in Colombo's Wellawatte area Friday came as elite army troops mounted a jungle offensive against Tiger guerrillas in the island's eastern region of Batticaloa.

"This bomb could have caused huge destruction in Colombo," said police Deputy Inspector-General T. B. Dissanayake. "We believe it is a Tiger bomb that was to be used in a suicide mission."

He warned there could be more bombs in the capital and said police and security forces assisting them have been placed on red alert.

Mr. Dissanayake said the bomb was similar to the van-bomb used in an unsuccessful attempt by the LTTE to bomb the international airport last year.

The LTTE also used a suicide bomber to drive a truck packed with explosives into the Central Bank building here, killing 91 and wounding 1,400 others on Jan. 31.

In fighting in the country's east, at least 22 guerrillas have been killed since the army's latest drive was launched Thursday with air force and navy support, military

officials said.

Ground troops killed two LTTE cadres overnight Friday while artillery units fired at suspected rebel concentrations deep inside the jungle, officials said.

"We have intercepted Tiger radio communications saying that three of their cadres were killed in artillery attacks and many more wounded," a military spokesman here said.

He said there were no losses on the army side but several soldiers were seriously wounded in close range fighting. The army had deployed its best fighting units, known as the Special Forces, to lead the offensive.

On Friday, troops consolidated at Vakkarai, a strategic coastal town captured from the Tigers. The LTTE said Saturday in a statement from its London office that the army had launched an offensive in Vakkarai but gave no details.

Government forces had destroyed five abandoned bases of the LTTE and recovered a large haul of mortar bombs, anti-personnel mines and radio communication equipment during the offensive.

Officials said rapid deployment units were dropped at a beach head between the districts of Trincomalee and Batticaloa by the navy to mount the offensive while MI-24 helicopter gunships pounded suspected LTTE positions.

The operation is aimed at flushing out

Tiger guerrillas responsible for a wave of attacks in the north-eastern region, where nearly 100 soldiers had been killed in sporadic violence this year, officials said.

Japan police probe drugging of babies at hospital

TOKYO (AFP) — Police searched a hospital in western Japan Saturday after three babies and an infant were found to have been drugged with an illegal stimulant drug, police officials said. The four being treated at the Wakayama Medical College Hospital were found in a state of agitation earlier this week. Doctors later detected the stimulant amphetamine, commonly known as "speed," in their urine. Police suspect someone put the drug in a hot water urn, which provided hot water for making milk and other drinks for the children, the officials said. They believe the drug was brought in from outside the hospital. The Yomiuri Shimbun said the amount of the drug found in the urn was enough to fill more than 30 injections for drug users, or about one gramme, which sells for about 170,000 yen (\$1,550) on the street. The effect of the drug is weaker when taken orally than when injected, and the children have all but recovered from the poisoning, the paper said.

Leslie Nielsen to return to serious stage role

ROME (R) — Canadian comic actor Leslie Nielsen, star of a string of madcap spoof movies including Airplane and The Naked Gun, said Thursday he was going back to his roots with a serious stage show. Nielsen, whose current Hollywood film Spy Hard is proving a major hit at the U.S. Box office, said he would make his stage comeback in a one-man play called Darrow. The white-haired actor, who names silent movie stars Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton as his idols, said he would spend three months touring with the show in Toronto, Ottawa, Detroit and Calgary starting in September.

"I've always loved the play, so I finally got enough money to buy the rights to it and I own it now," Nielsen, 70, told reporters in Rome where he was promoting Spy Hard. In his new stage production Nielsen will play Clarence Darrow, the famous American lawyer who defended John Scopes in the so-called monkey trial in 1925. Scopes was a teacher in rural Tennessee put on trial for teaching Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution, which conflicted the Biblical story of creation. The story was also the inspiration for the 1960 film Inherit the Wind starring Spencer Tracy.

Workers inspect a fallen tree. Most of the damage caused by a hurricane (Reuters photo)

Birds come first, EU court tells Britain

LUXEMBOURG (R) — Bird sanctuaries come before economic development, the European Court has told Britain. The court said Britain could not lop 22 hectares off Lappel Bank, a special bird protection zone near Sheerness, in the Thames estuary, and use it to expand the port, the fifth largest cargo and freight handling port in Britain. Britain's Royal Society for the Protection of Birds argued that Lappel Bank is an important part of the estuary's ecosystem and the loss of the intertidal area would have cut migratory and wild bird populations. The court said the Department of the Environment wanted to expand the port to protect its economic viability and to expand the local and national economy. But an EU state could not "when designating a special protection area and defining its boundaries, take account of economic requirements as constituting a general interest superior to that represented by the ecological objective..." the court said. It said this applied to any conservation area preserving "the natural habitats of wild fauna and flora."

Princess Diana leaves a London hotel for an official announcement on July 15. Their Decree Abrogation, ending the couple's 11-year marriage (Reuters photo)

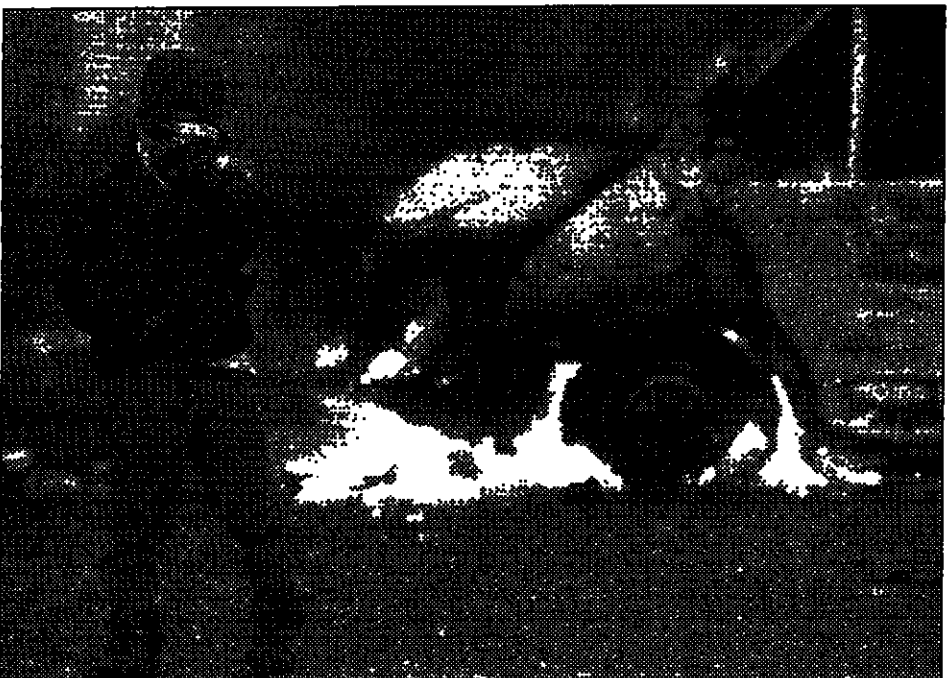
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A young masked Catholic child stands before a hijacked vehicle as it burns in the Ardoyne area of Belfast Friday (Reuters photo)

France woos Mandela

PARIS (R) — President Nelson Mandela Saturday began a four-day state visit to France, which is keen to develop political cooperation, trade and investment with South Africa.

Fresh from a hero's welcome in Britain, Mr. Mandela was greeted with military honours at Paris' Orly Airport by Finance Minister Jean Arthuis, underlining the economic priority of the visit.

He flew by helicopter to the country chateau of Rambouillet, a former royal hunting lodge southwest of Paris, where he was to have private talks with President Jacques Chirac Saturday night (1700 GMT) after a day's rest in his leafy deer park.

The South African leader will have three working sessions and two lunches with Mr. Chirac and be guest of honour at the annual Bastille Day military parade in Paris Sunday and at a presidential garden party marking the national holiday.

He will also meet French business leaders and receive an honorary law doctorate from the Sorbonne University.

French officials said Paris considered the visit, Mr. Mandela's fourth since 1990 but his first state visit, as a chance to pay tribute to a man who defeated apartheid and has led his

nation on a peaceful transition to multiracial democracy.

The newspaper Liberation said in an editorial that Mr. Chirac would be well advised to learn from Mr. Mandela's example to work for greater democracy and clean government in France's former colonies in West Africa.

French industrialists are keen to use the opportunity to seek a bigger share in South Africa's business, notably through the privatisation of public utilities.

France is the number four investor in South Africa and Pretoria's sixth-largest trading partner — with only 3.9 per cent of market share — behind Germany, the United States, Britain, Japan and Italy. Paris aims to boost trade by 50 per cent in the next three years.

In return, Pretoria will press for France's support for a free-trade agreement with the European Union, which Paris has been blocking partly to protect its agriculture but also in a wider dispute with Brussels over free trade negotiations.

Mr. Mandela's spokesman Parks Mankahlana said the president would outline his country's economic policies and attempt to allay business concerns at remaining foreign-exchange controls and delays in privatisation.

"The government has decided on a gradual removal of fixed controls. On privatisation, it's not a question of whether we will go ahead. But there has to be a careful examination of the issues. The government is seeking equity partners," Mr. Mankahlana said.

France, a former colonial power which has troops in six African states, would like to develop a partnership in peacekeeping and stabilisation in Africa. Pretoria has so far been reluctant to take a bigger role on the continent.

The warmth of the welcome reflects France's support for Mr. Mandela's movement during the apartheid years, rewarded in July 1994 when late President Francois Mitterrand became the first European leader to visit post-apartheid South Africa.

Following in Mitterrand's steps, Mr. Chirac is expected to nudge Mr. Mandela towards a bigger policing role in African conflicts. Mitterrand had hoped to forge a partnership based on a more interventionist South Africa but met with a lukewarm response.

"We intend to show South Africa our determination to build a deep and trusting relationship," Foreign Ministry spokesman Yves Dourthiaux said.

China warns of difficulties on test ban treaty

BEIJING (AFP) — A Chinese negotiator for the troubled test ban treaty warned Saturday that Beijing would never sign an "unequal treaty" that gave "one very advanced country" exclusive power to launch nuclear inspections.

In a clear reference to the United States, the diplomat said "one very advanced country" was attempting to use its own monitoring technology as a sole criterion to initiate on-site inspections under the treaty.

"We cannot allow a few countries to be self-proclaimed international police and we can never accept this," said the diplomat, who asked not to be identified.

"It is so obvious that these national technical means could be misused and the implication is clear that the future treaty could be unequal," he said.

But the diplomat, who will return to Geneva when negotiations resume on July 29, was still optimistic that this and other outstanding issues on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) could be resolved.

"We still have some time and we don't think this (deadlock) is the end of the world," he said.

Talks were temporarily suspended on June 28, mainly because India and a number of other non-declared nuclear nations insisted on making a link between a ban on testing and a concrete commitment to disarmament.

Other issues yet to be agreed include the procedure for initiating on-site inspections and the treaty's effective date.

China has already dropped its proposal to allow "peaceful nuclear explosions" that could advance non-aggressive technology.

Man arrested as explosion destroys Oklahoma motel room

OKLAHOMA CITY (R) — An Oklahoma man was arrested Saturday after an explosion tore apart his motel room and police found he had been making pipe bombs in an alleged plot to kill his ex-girlfriend, officials said.

The explosion destroyed two rooms at the red carpet motel in Edmond, just north of Oklahoma City, Friday night. When police arrived at the scene, they found four undetonated pipe bombs taped together, an explosive device and chemicals.

Kelly Spencer, a 30-

year-old man who had been renting the room for two months, was standing just outside or at the door when the accidental explosion occurred and he suffered only minor injuries, police said.

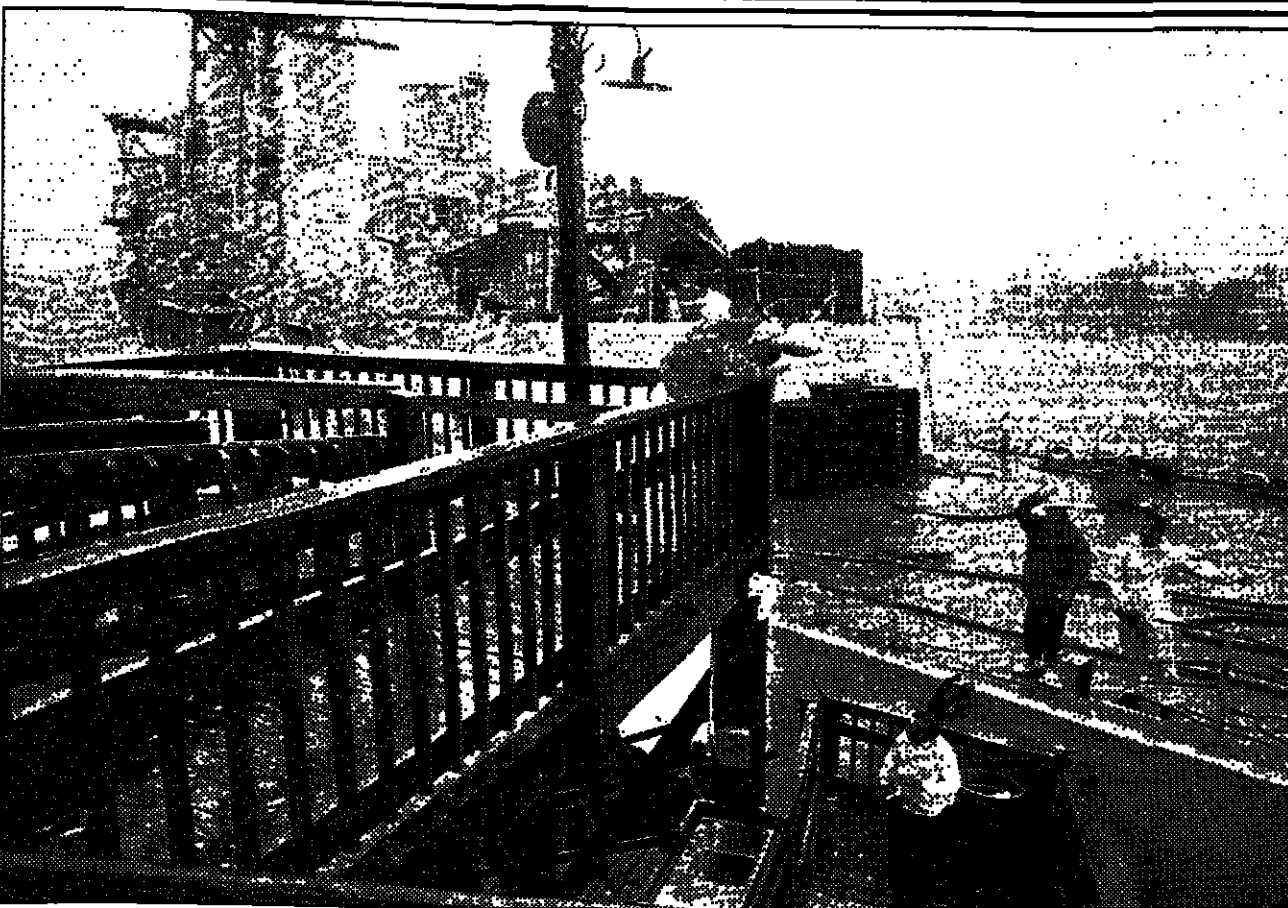
He was treated in hospital before being jailed on charges of manufacturing explosives.

"All indications are that this was motivated by a relationship that had gone bad and that he was building the pipe bombs with his ex-girlfriend in mind. She was the ultimate target," police spokesman Adrian Neal said.

Mr. Neal said no-one else was injured in the chemical explosion but that police evacuated the motel, a nearby mobile home park and several businesses, including a 24-hour day-care centre.

A team of hazardous materials experts was at the scene trying to identify the chemicals being used to build the bombs.

Several police officers and firefighters suffered nausea caused by exposure to the chemicals.



U.S. Coast Guardsmen assist salvage workers in securing a former U.S. destroyer after it broke loose from its moorings and damaged a dock during the passing of Hurricane Bertha Friday. The decommissioned vessel was being cut up for scrap metal. The eye of Hurricane Bertha made landfall nearby (Reuter photo)

Hurricane Bertha becomes tropical storm

WILMINGTON, N.C. (R) — Hurricane Bertha, downgraded to a tropical storm, moved through southeastern Virginia early Saturday and up the east coast bearing heavy rains and winds to about 60 mph (96 kph), according to the National Weather Service.

As dawn approached the storm was moving into the southern Chesapeake Bay, leaving behind scattered reports of flooding and downed trees.

Rain was expected to total six inches (15 cm) east of the storm's track as it moved north toward Massachusetts at 18 mph (29 kph). More than five inches (12 cm) was reported in

Northampton County, Virginia.

Bertha's gales weakened, but they uprooted trees, ripped roofs off buildings, knocked over signs and shredded power lines in North and South Carolina.

In New Hanover county, North Carolina, Carolina Power Light district manager Gayle Van Velsor said 70,000 customers were without power and it would not be restored until Sunday or Monday. She said 1,000 people from contractors, local crews and sister power companies would work to restore power.

On Friday, powerful winds of up to 115 mph (185 kph) near Wilmington

ripped part of a former navy destroyer — being dismantled as scrap metal — loose from its mooring in the Cape Fear River, setting it dangerously adrift, officials said.

Bertha had intensified as it moved over the warm waters of the gulf stream close to shore. Sustained winds climbed from 80 mph (128 kph) Friday to 105 mph (170 kph) as it bore down on a Carolina coastline evacuated by tens of thousands of residents and vacationers who fled to higher ground.

Residents began returning to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, Friday night to find homes and businesses largely intact as the storm

skirted the renowned resort city and went ashore in North Carolina.

The storm claimed at least six lives during its trek this week through the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Leeward Islands and Puerto Rico. A 4-year-old boy died Thursday when an F-16 military jet being moved to Eglin Air Force Base for safety from the storm crashed into a house in Pensacola, Florida.

Other deaths blamed on the storm included two Puerto Rican men who died when they lost control of their car on rain-slicked roads, and another who drowned while surfing. On the French island of St. Martin, police said one person was electrocuted and another was believed dead after she fell off a boat.

Wilmington — a 250-year-old port city nestled between the Cape Fear River and the Atlantic Ocean, known for its plantations, beaches and riverfront shops — appeared to take some of the worst damage.

Roads were blocked by fallen trees. Ocean piers crumbled under a ferocious surge of water pushed ashore by the storm, while the wind ripped roofs off buildings and toppled the ferris wheel at Jubilee Park in nearby Carolina Beach.

Massachusetts closed five state coastal beaches Friday and campers in at least 27 inland parks were warned about the dangers of flash floods and falling trees.



Road workers inspect a fallen tree that lies on a power line following high winds Friday. Most of the damage caused by Hurricane Bertha was minor in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina (Reuter photo)

Diana rich and free, but with uncertain future

LONDON (R) — Princess Diana was spending a quiet day with her sons Saturday after agreeing terms for a divorce from Prince Charles which will leave her a free, rich woman but with a far from certain future.

With the bitter marriage breakdown now behind him, Prince Charles was free to concentrate on what he regards as his crucial role as Britain's future king.

But Princess Diana, who loses the prestigious title

"Her Royal Highness" in exchange for an estimated 17 million pound lump sum settlement, will now never be crowned queen and her hopes of becoming a good-will ambassador or "queen of hearts" appear to have been thwarted.

"It isn't working out quite as planned. She will never represent the queen abroad and the government is lukewarm about the idea of giving her a role of a roving ambassador," wrote Andrew

Morton, whose 1992 autobiography of Princess Diana first revealed the sham of the royal marriage.

"She is jailed by her past inside the royal family, her present as mother of the future king, and her future as the possible bride of an adoring billionaire," Mr. Morton wrote in Saturday's Sun newspaper.

Royal sources said Prince Charles, 47, was planning a huge champagne party over the weekend to celebrate the end of the marriage that started with such glittering high hopes 15 years ago but turned so quickly into wrangling and infidelity.

The divorce will be formalised Monday when a civil court issues a decree nisi in a brief hearing which neither Prince Charles nor Princess Diana is required to attend. It should become final on Aug. 28.

Despite lacking the sympathy of much of the public, Prince Charles will have the full weight of the establishment behind him as he attempts to rebuild a reputation tarnished by adultery with old girlfriend Camilla Parker Bowles.

Prince Charles has said he has no plans to remarry but royal watchers expect Ms. Parker Bowles, also divorced, to gradually become a more public companion.

The future of Princess Diana, only 35 years old and graced with good looks and financial security, is far less clear.

She is expected to continue with her charity work

and Buckingham Palace said she would continue to attend some major state functions in her role as mother of Prince William, who is next in line to the throne after Prince Charles.

But the decision to strip her of her HRH title — which means that technically she is required to curtsy before her sons — was widely seen as a deliberate snub.

"Her royal humiliation" was the headline in the Daily Mail.

With every stiff formal phrase in the Buckingham Palace statement, the impression grows that Princess Diana has been swiftly brought to heel," the Daily Mail added.

Although Princess Diana is being allowed to maintain a home at Kensington Palace in London, royal watchers expect her to buy a smaller, more private home. Some reports say she may take an apartment in the United States, where she is adored by the public and has several close friends.

She is also said to be keen to remarry although the price for a paparazzi-style snap of her with any new man would fetch millions of pounds.

"Make no mistake, Diana wants to find happiness and have another child, preferably a baby girl," Mr. Morton wrote.

"Whatever direction she may choose, she will never be free of the paparazzi who at times make her life such a misery," he added.



Princess Diana leaves a London hotel Friday shortly after an official announcement was made that the Prince and Princess of Wales will start divorce proceedings on July 15. Their Decree Absolute is expected on Aug. 28, ending the couple's 15 year marriage (Reuter photo)

Russians tighten noose around Vedeno in tense waiting game

OUTSIDE VEDENO, Russia (AFP) — Russian troops besieging pro-rebel villages in the mountainous Vedeno region of southeastern Chechnya played a tense waiting game Saturday after a four-day blitz.

Extra troops joined the siege of Vedeno itself, in a bid to prevent any separatist rebels breaking out of the area.

An AFP correspondent near the village said there was a lull after four days of heavy bombardments by Russian warplanes, helicopter gunships and artillery.

Several helicopters flew over the Vedeno area, but did not open fire.

Two salvos of rockets were heard early in the morning.

Meanwhile, a Chechen district official said 15 civilians and 32 Chechen rebels had died in the Russian bombardment of Gekhi, a village in the southwestern lowlands.

Tokha Churchkhayev, head of the Urus Martan district administration, told Echo Moscow radio that 66 people were injured and more than 600 homes destroyed in the Russian air and artillery attacks on Gekhi, which began Tuesday.

The Russian command said Friday that fighting had stopped in Gekhi and police were searching for remaining separatist guerrillas.

Chechen fighters in Gekhi earlier resisted attempts by surrounding Russian troops to enter the village, which television pictures showed to be burning in several places.

A Russian general and a top Chechen commander died in the clashes in Gekhi Thursday.

The massive Russian land and air offensive was launched only a week after President Boris Yeltsin's reelection victory, and shat-



A police commando from pro-Moscow Chechen forces wields a grenade launcher as he waits for the order to enter the besieged village of Gekhi. Russian warplanes bombed the village for the fourth day Friday although local people, driven from their homes, said the guerrillas had already evacuated the settlement (Reuter photo)

tered a fragile ceasefire that had held for nearly six weeks.

Both sides signed a peace accord on June 10 envisaging a Russian troop withdrawal from the north Caucasus republic, demilitarisation and local elections in which the rebels would participate.

Dozens of civilians are reported to have been killed or wounded in the Russian blitz, but no accurate toll was available from independent sources Saturday.

Russian troops were blocking all access roads to Vedeno Saturday and only a trickle of vehicles passed through a military checkpoint on the road from Vedeno to Serzhen Yurt in the valley.

Sixteen tanks and armoured personnel carriers could be seen beyond the last Russian checkpoint on

the road to Vedeno, their guns trained on nearby woods, ready to open fire at any sign of movement.

"They're running into the mountains, but we're not going to let them escape like that," one Russian officer told AFP.

Two busloads of refugees — mainly women and children — were allowed through the checkpoint, heading for the Chechen capital Grozny.

The AFP correspondent, who visited Vedeno Friday, said some 3,000 civilians remained in the village, many of them hiding in cellars.

Only about 15 rebel fighters remained there.

Russian soldiers on the road to Vedeno said they were waiting for a military column to arrive, which was due to head into the mountains.

They said there were clashes with Chechen rebels

overnight in the Shatoi region, further west.

As a group of journalists interviewed the soldiers, an armoured personnel carrier opened fire over their heads, forcing them to leave.

Russian Nationalities Minister Vyacheslav Mikhailov said Friday the Kremlin "remains committed to the peace accords."

But in Vedeno, a separatist fighter named Khamid said: "We'll fight on everywhere. They can send two million soldiers. They'll never conquer a people that has fought for three hundred years."

The 19-month war has killed an estimated 40,000 people, mostly civilians.

It was triggered by a massive Russian military intervention in December 1994 aimed at crushing a three-year Chechen independence drive.

Indian troops barricade Srinagar

SRINAGAR, India (AFP) — Indian troops barricaded parts of Srinagar and confined Kashmiri leaders to their homes Saturday in a bid to prevent street rallies by Muslim militants and local politicians, witnesses said.

Paramilitary Border Security Force (BSF) soldiers were out in strength to enforce an "unofficial curfew" in parts of this state summer capital to prevent public gatherings.

Baton-wielding policemen and fully-armed federal troops ringed the city's main Jama Masjid mosque as part of the security operation, residents said by telephone.

State Police Chief A.K. Suri said the soldiers have been deployed as a precaution against possible violence.

"Muslim militants could start trouble in the guise of holding Martyr's Day rallies in the city," the official added.

Kashmiris organise marches on July 13 every year in the memory of 13 Muslim leaders who were killed during a rally to protest the rule of a Hindu king in Kashmir in 1931 when it was an unpartitioned princely state.

The Himalayan territory was divided between India and Pakistan after the independence of the subcontinent in 1947.

BSF troops Saturday placed leaders of the National Conference Party under virtual house arrest and ordered residents not to venture out in downtown Srinagar.

Security troops also slapped similar restrictions on the powerful All-Party Hurriyat Conference preventing its leaders from organising street marches.

Philippine Muslim rebel leader faces new kind of challenge

MANILA (AFP) — Philippines Muslim rebel leader Nur Misuari's decision to run for elective office marks the end of a 24-year armed struggle and the start of a new challenge to deliver on promises made to his people, analysts said Saturday.

Misuari, chairman of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), stunned the nation Friday when he announced he would be a candidate in the Sept. 9 elections for a Muslim autonomous region he had previously opposed.

Moreover, Mr. Misuari, 55, will be backed by the administration's political party which has thrown its weight behind him to ensure victory. It is footing his campaign bill and pressuring potential rivals to back out.

"This is the point of no return for Misuari and the MNLF," said Roman Catholic priest and University President Father Eliseo Mercado, who has supported the peace process.

"This concludes the chapter for the Moro National Liberation Front. The revolutionary struggle has come to an end," he said in remarks carried by the Philippine daily Inquirer.

With election as governor of the four-province autonomous region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) almost in the bag, Mr. Misuari faces the greater task of overseeing economic development in a strife-weary region.

A furious debate is on as to whether the bearded former university don should be made head of a council to oversee development projects in 14 provinces, including the ARMM, in the southern island of Mindanao and nearby areas on top of an elective post.

The council is intended to pave the way for the creation, after three years, of a broader Muslim autonomous region originally demanded by the MNLF, which waged a bloody separatist rebellion for the

mostly Christian nation's Muslim minority in the early 1970s.

The council's creation was agreed during the latest round of peace talks with the MNLF last month. A final peace accord is to be signed within two months after another round in Jakarta.

Observers said the ARMM governorship is part of a "package" of concessions granted by Manila to the MNLF.

"As ARMM governor, Mr. Misuari will have to deliver what the rebellion had failed to yield," the Manila Times newspaper said in an editorial.

"Having chosen to be part of the government he once fought and against which he led others to their deaths, Mr. Misuari is yet headed for what could be the toughest, maybe most decisive, battle of his life," it added.

Ironically, it took dogged persistence from President Fidel Ramos, a former general who had fought the MNLF at the height of the conflict, to convince his former nemesis to return to mainstream politics.

He said MNLF fighters now join the "constitutional fold under the aegis of an honourable, comprehensive and enduring peace with neither shame nor surrender, with dignity for all concerned."

Mr. Ramos has anchored the development of Mindanao, the country's second largest island, on a peace settlement. Mindanao is at the centre of a potentially lucrative "growth triangle" with Brunei and the eastern provinces of Malaysia and Indonesia.

With a stable environment, the South East Asian neighbours and Islamic countries could lead foreign investors into the region, Mr. Ramos has said.

"For too long, we have expended our energies, resources and goodwill in bloody confrontation and war," Mr. Ramos said. "Now is the time to redirect them to the supreme task of ... nation-building."

Clinton by welfare reform progress

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton said Saturday the Republican-led Congress was close to producing a welfare reform bill he could sign and welcomed what he hoped was "a new spirit of cooperation."

"This can be a real breakthrough, a genuine turning point," he said in his weekly radio address.

Mr. Clinton's optimism followed action by congressional Republicans Thursday against tying welfare

reform to a plan to give states new power to run the Medicaid health care programme for 37 million poor, disabled and elderly Americans.

The move increased chances a welfare bill ending six decades of federal guarantee of aid could become law this year. Congress is to vote on welfare reform next week, minus the Medicaid changes Mr. Clinton vowed to veto.

Republicans plan to have a bill on the president's

desk by their scheduled August recess.

"For three-and-a-half years I've worked with Congress to craft legislation that replaces welfare with work ... This week the Republican leaders announced that they are ready to work with me to pass a straightforward welfare re-form bill that I can sign into law, instead of sending me legislation they know I'll veto," Mr. Clinton said.

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The downsizing alternative

DURING HIS press conference Thursday, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti waged another economic offensive when he unveiled that in addition to rechanneling bread subsidy, he would take steps to cut down expenses in all government departments to cover the part of the remaining JD 100 million deficit that will remain on the books after "rechanneling" the bread subsidy.

The government seems to be dead serious about this new measure and looks determined to take a bold step similar to that on the subsidy of bread. One very important step in this regard is downsizing the bloated public sector. Such a move is needed now more than anytime before, especially when Mr. Kabariti himself announced during the press conference that salaries of civil servants eat up about 75 per cent of the budget's current expenditure.

This percentage is extremely high by any standard and indirectly shows that the Kingdom's employment policy has not been on the right track for so many years. Governments have always complained about deficits and sought higher income but with additional revenues obtained from customs and various other forms of taxation, most of the funds were recycled through hiring more and more civil servants.

According to fresh statistics obtained from the Ministry of Labour, the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Statistics, about 250,000 persons work in the public sector, including those who work on daily and contract basis out of an approximate 450,000 active labour force. Without downsizing the government, the public sector will continue to thwart all ambitions towards higher efficiency, improved performance and sound economy in general.

Reducing government spending entails, in addition to downsizing, other unpopular decisions on privatisation, agriculture, industry and many other areas. The Kabariti government, by rechanneling the bread subsidy, is opening a new economic era for the Kingdom. The main challenge is now whether Jordanians can see the taxes they pay going into productive areas and not for hiring more civil servants.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IN PURSUIT of its judaisation programme in Jerusalem, Israel has been withdrawing the identity cards of its Arab citizens under the pretext that they live outside the city and has been demolishing Arab homes built in the city suburbs, said Mohammad Barhoumeh, a writer for Al Ra'i. Work is going on at the same time on building settlements in and around the city, at evicting Arab families and enlarging the area where the walling wall is located, close to Al Aqsa Mosque, said the writer. All these measures, in addition to the confiscation of Arab lands and the opening of ring roads under the pretext of ensuring security for the Israelis, are clear indication that the present Israeli government does not want to comply with the peace requirements and is determined to remain in control of all Arab lands, at all costs, he added. The writer said it must be clear to the Arabs in Palestine and elsewhere that they have to join forces with the Islamic countries in order to take appropriate steps, at the international level, to secure their rights in the Holy City and that they need to exert efforts at different international fora to guarantee the return of the Islamic and Christian shrines and holy places to their legitimate owners and to ensure that the Holy City remains open to the followers of all the monotheistic faiths.

BY URGING the Jordanian public to cut down on spending and avoid buying unnecessary commodities, in a bid to help their country become self-sufficient and self-reliant, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti is following in the footsteps of his predecessor, the late Abdul Hamid Sharaf, said Mohammad Kawash, a writer for Al Dustour, Saturday. The call on Jordanians to cut down on spending 20 years ago went unheeded because then Jordanians did not face difficult situations like today, he said. Abdul Hamid Sharaf had declared a plan for cutting public spending and urged Jordanians to follow suit in their daily life and in all sectors although Jordan, then, was not facing difficult financial situations as it is at present, he noted. Now Mr. Kabariti is sounding the alarm about the economic and financial situation in Jordan and is issuing an appeal to the public to help the government meet its commitments to the world, and at the same time work towards attaining self-sufficiency, said the writer. He expressed hope that all future government would follow Mr. Kabariti's example and institutionalise wise spending so that Jordanians can attain the aspired goals.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

'Big foreign investment, at last'

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

IT IS not understood why, during the Amman Economic Summit last October, the media made a point to highlight the potential of foreign investments that will flow into Jordan after having peace with Israel and the improvement of the investment climate in the country.

Apparently very little, if anything, did materialise, except for those projects and contracts which were already agreed upon before the summit, while that same media keeps silent now when huge real foreign investment takes place. No light was shed on the new planned project, except for the short announcement made by the minister of energy and natural resources which was used by the local news bulletin of our TV station and on the radio's economic news bulletin.

I am of course referring to the project proposed by Corporate Holding of America (CHA), a big American oil company, to build a huge oil refinery in the Aqaba region devoted solely to exports, which may be operational by the year 2000. This project will secure revenues roughly estimated to add up to \$150 to \$200 million a year in the form of taxes and various fees and levies.

When this project is implemented, it will create some ten thousand jobs. It will build a town to house the engineers,

managerial staff and labourers employed by the refinery. This, in turn, will cause a rapid economic growth and a jump in the gross domestic product no one so far bothered to calculate.

The preliminary agreement signed in mid-June 1996, gives Jordanian citizens the right to participate in the paid up capital of the Aqaba refinery at 33 per cent discount, i.e., you buy two shares and get three in exchange.

The whole facility will be turned to the government free of charge around the year 2020, after 20 years of operation, except for the shares which belong to the Jordanians. No environmental hazards are expected because the American company is committed to satisfy Jordanian and international environmental standards. The refinery will be built east of the mountains, and will not have any negative impact on civilian life or tourists in the city of Aqaba.

The gigantic project will cost something like \$2.8 billion, thus exceeding total foreign investments which were attracted by Israel after peace. Many auxiliary projects will be called for to serve the refinery, such as roads, pipelines, a specialised port to export petroleum etc. This will augment the economic returns of the country.

The first impression one may have immediately upon

hearing the above details is that the project is too good to be true.

One may ask if there are other aspects of the projects which were kept away from the public, whether the project is real and not fictitious and if the investor is serious, sound and safe to deal with and trust.

It seems that the answers to these legitimate questions are reassuring. The investor is not a broker but a real and sound investor acting on the advice from the American Department of Trade.

The American ambassador to Jordan recommended the company and endorsed its project without reservation. Over and above, the Ministry of Energy obtained a bank guarantee for \$12 million which can be cashed if the investor does not go ahead or delays the implementation of the project.

When some people toss the embarrassing question about economic projects that Jordan gained due to peace with Israel, we now have something concrete and substantial to point out. It is a project that deserves more attention and informing the people.

The Mideast's moderate centre is under pressure

By Thomas L. Friedman

WASHINGTON — In March, just after four suicide bombers blew themselves up in Israel, an extraordinary summit meeting was held on the Sinai Peninsula, in Sharm Al Sheikh, Egypt. That summit meeting brought together for the first time leaders from most of the Arab World and Israel to reaffirm that they were all in the same trench in fighting terrorism.

What made the meeting so extraordinary was not simply that Arab leaders came together to bolster Shimon Peres, but that it indicated a new alignment was forming in the Middle East — a new moderate centre. For the first time, Arab states stretching from Morocco to Saudi Arabia were openly aligning with Israel and leaving Iran, Syria, Libya and Iraq on the sidelines.

In the wake of the Saudi bombing, the Israeli elections and the Arab summit meeting last month, one wonders whether Sharm Al Sheikh won't be remembered as the brief shining moment of a moderate centre that came and went. Because the key forces that shaped that moderate centre are now all under pressure. Here's how:

The core: At the core of this moderate centre, what made it initially possible, was the strategic understanding at Oslo between Israel and the Palestinians to recognise each other and finally resolve their historic dispute. It was that core understanding that paved the way for Israel's opening with the moderate Arab states. That core understanding also made possible Israeli-Palestinian cooperation in a broad range of areas, including security affairs, that were never part

of their relationship before.

If the new Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, preserves that partnership, the moderate centre can survive. If he squanders it by treating the Palestinian National Authority's Yasser Arafat as a pariah, not a partner, then the centre won't hold and Israel will enjoy neither quiet at home nor good relations with the Arabs abroad. After initially keeping Mr. Arafat at bay, Mr. Netanyahu, in one good sign, sent a top adviser to meet the Palestinian leader last week, prompting a protest from some in his own cabinet.

But no one should fool himself here: the only way the moderate centre will hold is if the bargain at its core holds, and that bargain says that Mr. Arafat must make a 100 per cent effort to insure Israel's security and Israel must make a 100 per

cent effort to bring about Palestinian self-government in the West Bank and Gaza. Anything less from either side won't work.

The first ring: The centre will never be strong unless the first ring around the core holds too, and there Egypt is the key. But Egypt today is playing a double game. One day it tries to lead the Arabs closer to Israel; one day it tries to lead them away. This is because Egypt, long the dominant Arab power, is jealous of Israel's rising influence. As long as Mr. Peres was in power in Israel, Egypt kept its worst instincts under some control, but the new hardline Likud government could be used by Egypt as a pretext to lead the Arabs away from the centre. The recent Cairo Arab summit meeting, which revived some of the most stale anti-Israel rhetoric, was a bad sign.

The outer ring: The latest

devastating bombing in Saudi Arabia is bound to

intimidate the Saudis and other Gulf states, and make them less willing to be part of any moderate alliance with Israel. There are internal problems in Saudi Arabia. Something is boiling there beneath the sands, and it's more than a few fringe fanatics.

The United States: If the moderate centre is to survive, the United States is going to have to play the crucial, tough-minded role of the reality principle, reminding everyone of what is required to move forward. Are President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher prepared for that? The early signals are not good. Mr. Christopher is already "adapting" or muffling long-held principles of American policy in the Middle East to avoid offending the new Israeli government.

That will only encourage parties to duck reality, not face it.

To Israelis and Palestinians the U.S. must make clear that they will never wage a successful, cooperative war against terrorism without also waging a meaningful war for peace. To Egypt the United States must make clear that its leadership in the region is needed, but only as a leader of inclusion, not polarisation.

And to Saudi Arabia, Washington must make clear that it wants the Saudi regime to survive, but that no one can help the Saudi rulers if they won't take a hard look at all the sources of their domestic troubles — and that means not only looking underground but also in the mirror.

The New York Times

In Saudi Arabia, little love for the U.S.

By Chandra Muzaffar

PENANG, Malaysia — It would be a great pity if the American public never learned what United States policy makers know: that there is growing popular opposition to the American presence in Saudi Arabia. The bombing in Dhahran was the boldest and bloodiest expression of that opposition.

The mainstream Western news media have ignored the anger and disenchantment of a significant segment of Saudi society with U.S. policies in the Arab World. Middle-class professionals, academics, elements among the religious elites, businessmen and even people connected to the Saudi aristocracy are part of a movement battling

what it sees as the U.S. control of the kingdom that has been made possible by the Saudi ruling family.

The Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights under Mohammad Massari, which operates from London, is but the best known of the groups of dissidents who seek an end to both U.S. dominance and Saudi autocracy. In the last five years, some of these dissidents have been imprisoned in Saudi Arabia or expelled.

Human-rights organisations such as Liberty for Muslim World and Amnesty International have come to the defence of these dissidents.

Opposition to the American presence and the Saudi oligarchy, which had been simmering for a long time, gained momentum

during the Gulf war. The stationing of a huge U.S. military contingent on Saudi soil as part of an allied force to drive the Iraqis from Kuwait incensed Saudis who saw no direct Iraqi threat to the kingdom.

Moreover, the ruler of Saudi Arabia is regarded as the custodian of the Muslim holy cities of Mecca and Medina; some Saudis were outraged to see a non-Muslim guardian of the custodian.

In addition, an increasing number of educated Saudis distrust the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, seeing it as primarily a method to ensure U.S.-Israel dominance of the Arab World.

They regard the U.S. government not as an honest broker but as the protector

of Israeli interests and its own need for continued access to oil — and the Saudi regime is seen as colluding in this.

For many Saudis, the bias of the United States became transparent during the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon earlier this year and the Israeli shelling of the United Nations base at Cana, which killed more than 100 civilians. The United States stood solidly by Israel, unwilling even to administer a mild rebuke. The Cana massacre has created an avalanche of anger and bitterness against the United States among the Arabs.

This is why the United States should change its course in the Arab World. For a start, it should withdraw its 5,000 troops from

Saudi Arabia and reduce its military presence in the Gulf. And it should stop acting as protectors of governments whose support is rapidly waning. Supporting unrepresentative regimes is surely a betrayal of the democratic principles upon which the United States is founded.

Washington also should persuade its Arab allies to allow the growth of independent political movements, many of which abhor violence and want to see peaceful change. Brutal methods of crushing dissent only encourages violence by the dissenters.

Finally, the United States should apply all the pressure at its command to compel Israel to work towards a genuine, negotiated peace that recognises the legiti-

cy of an independent, sovereign Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. Washington should realise that ordinary Palestinians and Arabs, including the Saudis, will not accept a farcical peace process that seeks to establish a Palestinian homeland that is not truly independent.

If such changes were incorporated into U.S. policy towards the Arab World, there is a strong possibility that the cycle of violence in the Middle East would finally be broken.

The writer is a political scientist at the Science University of Malaysia in Penang. This article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

M. KAHL



LETTERS

Wasted water

To the Editor:

THERE IS a lot of talk going on these days about the shortage of water. I would like to call it the wasting of water. Everyday while going to work one can see big pools of water in the middle of the road, or running water. When seeing these, one automatically suspects that a pipe is broken, like I did, but if one goes to the source one will find that cars have been washed or people have washed their yards with hoses.

I live in a block of flats and when it is our turn for water, the water will not go up to the tanks until all our neighbours on low ground have filled their tanks, or washed their clothes, or cleaned their cars and yards.

I understand that providing water to everybody is not an easy job.

There is so much high ground in Jordan that if the people on the low ground would fill their tanks and let others have a turn instead of abusing water when it is finally supplied, there would be enough to go round for all.

I was brought up with this saying: "Think of others before yourself." I think we should all try to comply with this and perhaps the situation would be better.

Kawther Yousef,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Featur
Compe
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Florida
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By Sarah Tippit
Ruler

ORLANDO, Florida — As summer heat ushers in the tourist season, competition is heating up among the clusters of theme parks in the central Florida region. Universal Islands of Adventure, a quarter-century-old by a lone pioneer, is a few years ago, Walt Disney World's magic kingdom and Epcot centre, which features scientific exhibits and showcases 11 exhibits and shows every 11 minutes, were the Orlando area's only major purveyors of fantasy amusement.

Today, several major theme parks have gotten on the list. Visitors can go through high-tech replicas of ancient Egypt, complete with roaming dinosaurs and live big cats, and watch a "North Pole" show every year, and a "Boardwalk" show every year.

Universal Islands of Adventure, a fake "New York City," and a movie-themed park, Islands of Adventure, are also in the area. Universal Islands of Adventure, a fake "New York City," and a movie-themed park, Islands of Adventure, are also in the area.

And to Saudi Arabia, Washington must make clear that it wants the Saudi regime to survive, but that no one can help the Saudi rulers if they won't take a hard look at all the sources of their domestic troubles — and that means not only looking underground but also in the mirror.

The writer is a political scientist at the Science University of Malaysia in Penang. This article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

Walt Disney world recently announced its plan to build a new cruise ship terminal. By buying a private island that will be open for guests within two years.

Universal Studios plans a multi-billion expansion to include a jazz institute and club, and Orlando's second Hard Rock Café, which is the largest in the world.

The dizzying growth is seen on the region's fame as a "pretend" destination. Ad. Ad. Milman, a senior expert at the University of Central Florida, says "People feel secure coming to an artificial destination where they don't need passports, visas, where it's supposedly clean and secure, so this is probably what our society wants, a new common." Mr. Milman said.

Competition helps make

Suspicious

By David Ljunggren
Reuter

LONDON — The nightmare vision of advanced Russian submarines prowling silently through the world's oceans and sinking warships at will should have been laid to rest at the end of the cold war.

But Western officials are increasingly alarmed by the huge sums Moscow is pouring into new attack submarines intended to play a much more aggressive role than in the past.

"We find the Russian submarine investment worrisome, the fact that a country asking us for aid money is pouring billions into submarines," said Rear Admiral James Stark, president of the U.S. Naval War College.

"Where is the threat to them coming from? It is not coming from the United States, Britain or Nor-

Features

Competition heats up at Florida theme parks

By Sarah Tippit
Reuters

ORLANDO, Florida — As summer heat ushers in the tourists, competition is heating up among the cluster of theme parks in the central Florida region made famous a quarter-century ago by a lone mouse.

A few years ago, Walt Disney world's magic kingdom and Epcot centre, which features scientific exhibits and showcases 11 nations, were the Orlando area's only major purveyors of fantasy amusements.

Today, several major theme parks have gotten into the act. Visitors can trek through high-tech fake versions of Africa complete with roaming gorillas and giraffes, watch polar bears and live beluga whales at a mock "North Pole" and tour every pseudo-location in-between including the "boardwalk" of Atlantic City, a fake "Key West," an urban-style "Chinatown" and faux "New York City."

At movie-themed parks such as Disney-MGM studios and Universal Studios, visitors "ride the movies" and get a glimpse of real-life movie making and television production.

There is also a plethora of after-hours attractions featuring nightclubs, sunsets and fireworks, restaurants, movie theatre megacomplexes, live entertainment and hotels designed to capture the convention markets and attract empty-nesters, couples whose children no longer live at home.

Walt Disney world recently announced its entry to the cruise ship business by buying a private island that will be fully open for guests within two years.

Universal Studios plans a multi-billion expansion to include a jazz institute and club, and Orlando's second Hard Rock Café, billed as the largest in the world.

The dizzying growth is based on the region's fame as a "pretend" destination, said Andy Millman, a tourism expert at the University of Central Florida.

"People feel secure coming to an artificial destination where they don't need passports, visas, where it's spotlessly clean and secure, so this is probably what our society wants, a mini cosmos," Mr. Millman said.

Competition helps make

Orlando a return destination and encourages a longer stay, said Bill Peep, Orlando Orange County bureau executive director.

"What is being built is not just a new ride in one of the parks. We're building whole new parks — new destinations. We can tell you stories of British families getting off the airplane without reservations for a car or a hotel because it's their second, third or fourth trip and they know they can shop the market," Mr. Peep said.

Theme parks and hotels are forming alliances that offer airfare, lodging, transportation packages and multi-park passes to create an easy and affordable "seamless resort experience."

Universal Studios Florida has joined forces with the water park Wet n Wild and two Anheuser-Busch parks, sea world and Tampa's busch gardens, which mimics the African continent and boasts the world's largest roller coasters.

"Value passes" to all four parks cost slightly less than Walt Disney world's multi-park passes. The passes cost \$119.95 for adults and \$96.95 for children 3 to 9 for unlimited admission to any of the four parks over seven days.

Disney multi-park passes vary in price, but a five-day three-park Disney pass costs \$196 for ages 10 and up and includes two bonus days of water theme park fun and nighttime entertainment.

Universal plans four new resorts, a convention centre and several golf villas to compete with Walt Disney world's 27 existing resorts.

The movie theme park also plans to put its own concierges in 18 area hotels by September. The "vacation planners," who will be trained by Universal, will be on hand to help guests at participating hotels plan their vacations.

The hotels will also offer free transportation to Universal and its allied theme parks.

The Universal alliance is negotiating with overseas tour operators. Earlier this month, it announced agreements with two British tour operators, Virgin Holidays and Laker Vacations, for value pass promotion. They will also book travel packages that include hotel rooms and other services.

The big zoology gallery — a new beginning for Noah's ark

By Pascale Teinac

THE ELEPHANTS start the procession, the rhinoceroses follow in their steps, the giraffes gently sniff the air, the antelopes are ready to leap, the hyena is looking for some carrion to eat, the buffaloes and gnus move peacefully forward, the hippopotamuses saunter off towards a welcoming pool and the zebras end the parade.

It is a big procession of animals from the African Savannah, one of the highlights of the Zoology Gallery at the Natural History Museum in Paris which reopened after 29 years of dusty slumber.

It has been entirely rethought in its old setting which has been renovated, and the presentation of the animals is now staged in a modern way.

The museum's Zoology Gallery, which was built by the architect Jules André to house and present the millions of specimens collected by traveller-naturalists over the centuries, was opened in 1889 after 12 years of work. It had been closed to the public since 1965. Indeed, there was a risk of its collapsing after damage from air battery-fire during World War II.

Thousands of stuffed animals then sank into oblivion and dust, until it was decided, in 1986, to renovate this "Louvre of Natural History" and it was included in the state's "Big Building Projects," just like the "Grand Louvre," for a total budget of 400 million francs (\$78 million).

An architectural competition was held and it was won by two architects together, the Frenchman Paul Chemetov and the Chilean Borja Huidobro, who had already designed the new Ministry of Finance, built in order to free the Louvre from the presence of these administrative offices.

A painter, René Allio, who was a theatre stage-designer and filmmaker, was also appointed to stage the inside presentation. Work began in 1991 and lasted three years. Finally, President Mitterrand was able to inaugurate the fabulous new Big Gallery, a temple of life on earth.

The original building, which is a fine example of the late 19th century, with a huge glass roof, has been maintained, but completely renovated to enable the museum's collections (which are among the richest in the world) to be presented in a worthy way, around the major theme of evolution.

In the central nave (55 metres long, 25 metres

wide and 30 metres high, with a permanent exhibition area of 6,000 square metres and 300 display cases), the show unfolds in three acts, marked with discoveries all along its three-storey itinerary.

First, the origins of life, which the visitor begins with the sea, where life appeared some 3.5 billion years ago, and continues with the discovery of life on land. Then the evolution of life since the appearance of single-cell creatures, which provided man with food for thought. And finally, man as an agent in the evolution process through his activities: over-exploitation of species, domestication, the transfer of species, pollution and the transformation of the landscape.

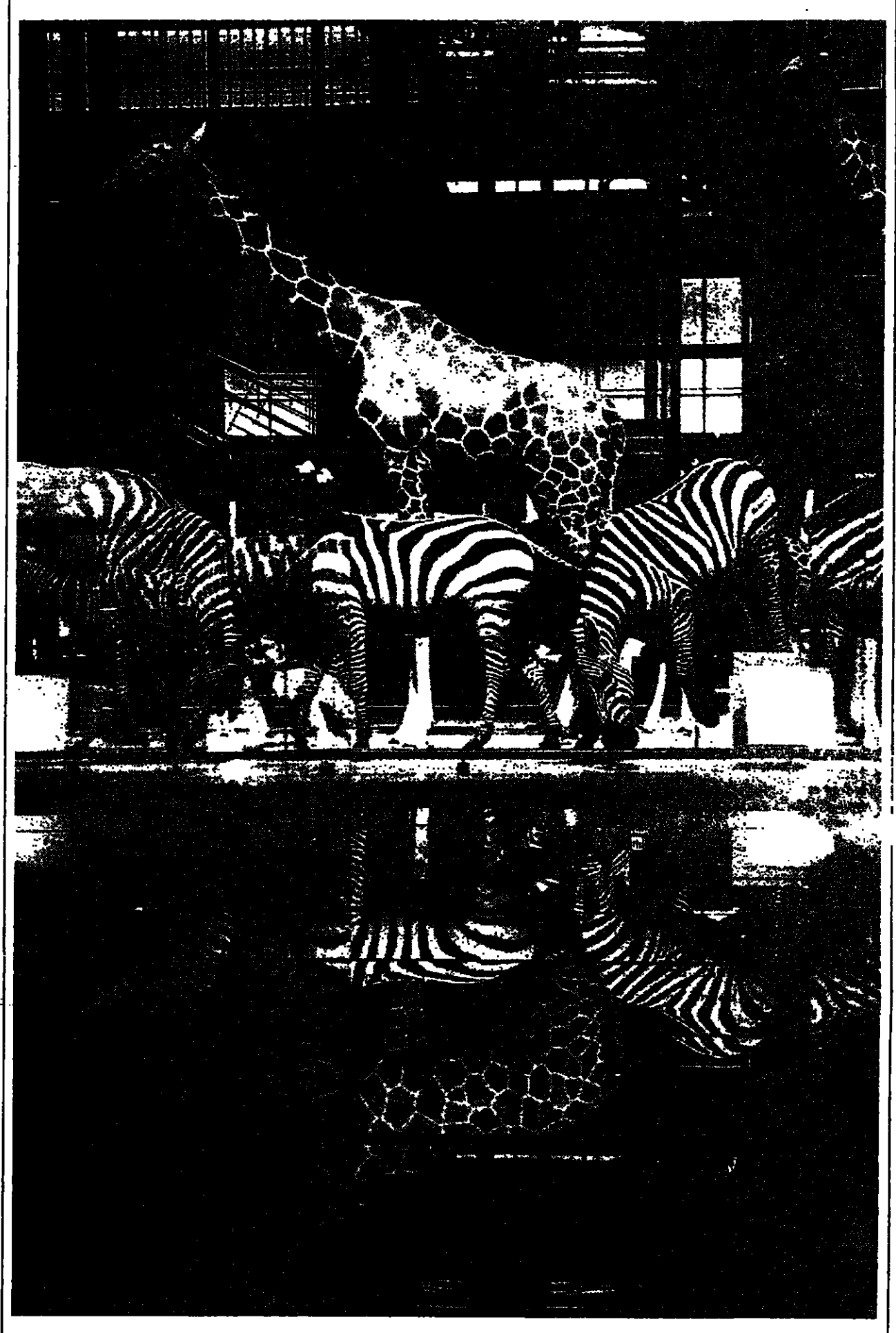
The circuit of the discovery of life is magnificent. The visitor is received in the sea-life area by the skeleton of a whale, on the ground, and two others hanging in the air in the nave. He is led through a series of fish where sea mammals, turtles and seabirds also appear and hundreds of sea invertebrates can be seen in the display-cases.

A long access ramp to the next level leads to life on the land and that is where he discovers the sumptuous tour of the African Savannah, completed by a visit of the animals of the Sahara desert. The discovery takes place in a musical atmosphere in which one can hear 500 animal noises, in harmony with a gradual modification of the lighting, evoking the passing of a day from dawn to dusk.

The light comes from the 10,000 points of optical fibres for, although the glass roof of the nave has been preserved, no sunlight is allowed to enter as this is harmful for the preservation of the rare species.

A striking fact is that the animals are within reach of the visitor; the pedestals on which they have been placed have been concealed in the ground. Will children be able to resist the temptation to stroke them? The question obsesses the three taxidermists who are the real heroes of the museum and who did some extraordinary restoration work on the specimens which are presented, many of which were badly damaged. With every step, visitors can admire this great art.

A special room (in the historical setting of the former Bird Gallery of the museum, with its original wood-paneelling and display-cases that are protected as historical monuments) is devoted to extinct or threatened species. This is the Museum's Treasure



Scene from the Zoology Gallery restored by architects Chemetov and Huidobro (photo L'actualité en France)

where 120 very rare specimens are presented. The temperature and humidity levels are continuously controlled there and the number of visitors admitted is limited.

The room contains the skeleton of a black emu which is unique in the world. It comes from Kangaroo Island, near Australia, and the species, which was sought for its flesh, became extinct before 1840. Only three stuffed specimens are known, including the one in the museum, of the Seychelles tortoise, exterminated by the island's inhabitants before the middle of the 19th century. Another extinct species is the kuaga, a poorly striped zebra exterminated at the time when South Africa was colonised, and also the American passenger pigeon which became extinct because the species only reproduced when they were numerous and their numbers gradually dwindled.

The rhinoceros still exists, but the one lordling it in his glass cage is the oldest stuffed specimen in the museum and the first stuffed rhinoceros in the world. It arrived in France at the time of Louis XV in 1770, from Chandernagor in India and died during the French Revolution in 1793. Its tanned hide was placed on a kind of large wooden dummy whose limbs were made of table-legs.

L'actualité en France

Suspicious West asks what Russia doing with subs

By David Ljunggren
Reuters

LONDON — The nightmare vision of advanced Russian submarines prowling silently through the world's oceans and sinking warships at will should have been laid to rest at the end of the cold war.

But Western officials are increasingly alarmed by the huge sums Moscow is pouring into new attack submarines intended to play a much more aggressive role than in the past.

"We find the Russian submarine investment worrisome, the fact that a country asking us for aid money is pouring billions into submarines," said Rear Admiral James Stark, president of the U.S. Naval War College.

"Where is the threat to them coming from? It is not coming from the United States, Britain or Nor-

way. Their requirements for naval forces are around their own coasts, where there is a lot of instability," he said in an interview.

"Therefore I don't see the need for them to have a high-technology building programme."

Experts say the improved Russian attack submarines, designed to roam the oceans in the hunt for large vessels and other submarines, are quieter than their Western counterparts and have more effective weapons.

Rupert Pengetley of Jane's international defence review magazine said although some Western commanders were talking up Russian superiority in a bid to boost defence budgets, there was no doubt Moscow had stolen a march on its competitors.

"The Russians have advanced at a faster rate

than was predicted. They have outdone themselves," he said.

"They could afford to have noisier submarines because they don't need to get as close to their targets as Western craft but in fact they are quieter," he said.

"The Russians are also changing up a gear and deploying their submarines much further away from home."

Mr. Pengetley said Moscow wanted submarines capable of operating at long distances because it assumed that future surface warships would be able to launch cruise missiles against Russian land targets from as far away as 4,500 km.

To ram home the point, Russian nuclear attack submarines have twice, carried out long-term deployments near U.S. fleets in the last year. Mr. Pengetley said U.S. observers had been very

impressed by the submarines' performance.

"What they've had as a priority is extending their defence against very long-range missiles. They want a shield against the U.S."

"What would happen if Sweden and Finland joined NATO? It could be explosive. The perception is that the United States is now putting into effect a new policy of containment," he said.

Western intelligence officials say that although Moscow has just 99 submarines today compared with 186 a decade ago, more than half of the existing craft can slip unnoticed into the West's main sea lanes.

"I have great admiration

for what the Russians are doing with their submarines. The thing which worries me is not the Russians' naval capabilities but the general air of instability around NATO's borders. What is going to happen in the future?"

systems," said John Berryman, a Russian strategic studies expert at the University of Wolverhampton.

for what the Russians are doing with their submarines," said a senior British naval official, who

asked not to be identified.

"The thing which worries me is not the Russians' naval capabilities but the general air of instability around NATO's borders. What is going to happen in the future?"

Talk of spending money on new underwater craft jars with the sight of countless rusting Russian ships tied up at port. But Moscow seems to have decided that submarines offer better value than expensive and vulnerable surface vessels.

"They have lost a lot of units... But those which have gone are the older, less capable ones, the liabilities," said Sir Julian Oswald, former chief of the British naval staff.

"Noise reduction means their submarines can operate far further out and recent forays into the north Atlantic deliver a political message. The force is undoubtedly lean-

er and fitter," he told a recent conference on the Russian navy.

Improved versions of the Akula class submarine are already operating in western waters while the first of the new Severodvinsk class is expected to enter service in 2000.

These will have special tubes for vertically-launched missiles and will also feature three separate arrays — special sensitive devices which help pick up sound — to cut the chance of the craft being ambushed.

The Russian navy is also unique in deploying high-speed underwater missiles, including the 200 knot Shkval missile, which has a range of up to 10 km and can reportedly be fitted with a nuclear warhead.

Analysts: Saudi Arabia needs more reforms

RIYADH (R) — Saudi Arabia is enjoying a cushion of higher oil prices, but it needs further reforms to put its economy on a sustainable path, economists and diplomats say.

Oil will remain the main source of income for the world's biggest producer, but volatile oil prices and expected annual population growth of 3.0-4.0 per cent until the end of the decade have prompted the government to change its ways, they said.

Oil makes up 70 per cent of state revenue. The Saudi 1995-2000 economic plan talks of a bigger private sector role, diversification and finding jobs for its citizens — which economists say are long-term and slow processes.

"The general theme of growth in the kingdom in the next five years is how to involve the private sector," said Anwar Ahmad of the Riyadh-based Consulting Centre for Finance and Investment.

"...Barring an unexpected boost in oil revenues, further subsidy and price reforms will be needed to meet the government target of balancing the budget by 2000," said the U.S. embassy 1996 Economic Trends Report on Saudi Arabia.

Decades of oil wealth had financed a generous subsidy system giving Saudis some of the world's lowest utility rates. But a fall in oil prices in recent years has prompted the kingdom to slash subsidies and tell citizens to prepare for belt-tightening.

Technocrats in the government formed last year want to see new reforms and further cuts in the welfare system, which the royal family is keen to preserve to keep citizens happy, the economists and bankers said.

"They should consider some further fiscal reform, but I think the social costs of doing those particularly so soon after increasing tariffs the year before was too big for the government to contemplate this year," one bank manager said.

Economists said there was still scope for cuts. Even with the utilities price increases of last year, Saudi is still pay six times less than people in western Europe, for example.

They said that although Saudi Arabia earned in the first half of 1996 about \$4 billion more than it had budgeted for thanks to stronger oil prices, the government was still squeezing spending to try to eliminate over a decade of budget deficits, projected at \$4.9 billion in the 1996 budget.

The higher-than-anticipated revenue has allowed Riyadh to build up its foreign reserves and has eased cash-flow problems, allowing it to meet billions of dollars of outstanding debts to contractors and farmers, they said.

"The government is repaying its debts on the due days. It seems to be financing its day-to-day requirements through the normal issue of Saudi government development bonds. They are meeting all current payments on due date," one banker said.

The economists and diplomats said the extra revenue was likely being thrown at military purchases from the United States and building up foreign reserves depleted by Gulf

war costs. International Monetary Fund (IMF) figures for the first quarter of 1996 estimate foreign currency reserves at \$10.8 billion, up \$2 billion from the same period last year. They show foreign reserves had fallen to \$5.9 billion in 1992 from \$11.6 billion in 1991 in the wake of the high Gulf war costs.

"Looking at the increase in oil revenues, the most common question I hear is 'where has the money gone?'" said a diplomat.

"There seems to be an attempt to build up reserves depleted after the Gulf war," he said.

"There is a smaller share of the pie and it's now in demand from an increasing number of Saudis. The private sector companies are taking up the responsibility," an economist said.

Economists and bankers said the state's Saudi Industrial Development Fund (SIDF), which plays an important role in encouraging the private sector, was giving out more loans.

Latest Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency data shows new SIDF loans in the third quarter of 1995 at \$52.2 million, up from \$47.2 million in the third quarter of 1994 and 309 million riyals in the same period of 1993.

Economists said they were largely optimistic about the outlook for the Saudi economy. They said there were no signs of pressure to devalue the dollar-linked riyal, the five per cent inflation rate in 1995 was expected to decrease, and the banking sector has posted solid results in the past years.

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Analysts say Israel budget cuts overdue

TEL AVIV (R) — The Israeli government's 1997 budget cuts may be painful, especially to the middle class, but analysts said they were necessary to lower 15 per cent annual inflation — and long overdue.

Late Sunday the cabinet approved slicing 4.9 billion shekels (\$1.5 billion) from next year's budget, bringing total spending in 1997 to 170 billion shekels (\$53 billion).

The proposal — which cuts defence and education spending while lowering subsidies for health and capital investment — was pushed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has made economic reform a cornerstone of his new government.

In office only three weeks, Mr. Netanyahu shoved the cuts through so he could take at least one victory with him to Washington during his official visit this week.

Mr. Netanyahu is eager to woo foreign investors who have lowered their profile waiting for him to act on Middle East peace. He said his economic message was for Wall Street, not Washington.

"My message is that in Israel it is worthwhile investing, not because we give subsidies but because we have a wonderful nation, with talents, with technicians and engineers," he told reporters Sunday night.

Analysts said the muscles Mr. Netanyahu had flexed so far bode well for the fate of the budget programme, which must still be approved by parliament before year's end.

"Every year we have horse-trading but Benjamin has shown himself to be in control," said Jonathan Katz, senior economist at Capital Holdings Consultants.

"There may be some tradeoffs (in the cuts) but I doubt it will lead to major changes," he added.

Nehemia Strasler, economics editor at the newspaper Haaretz, said the budget cuts would not hurt lower-income Israelis but

would affect the middle and upper classes, through a reduction in child allowances and higher health and transportation costs.

"This is a blow dictated by reality," Mr. Strasler said, referring to high inflation and a current account deficit in the balance of payments nearing \$5 billion.

"If there was no cut, the economy in a year or two would reach a true crisis that would require far more drastic steps which would lead us to a recession," he wrote in Haaretz.

Mr. Netanyahu said he inherited a sick economy from the Labour-led government he defeated in May.

"If we had not done what we are doing the economy could have quickly come to a state in which we would have lost control of it, prices would have risen for everyone at an uncontrollable pace," he said in an interview on Army Radio.

Israeli markets hope that by lowering inflation, the cuts will enable the central bank to loosen up on monetary policy.

Last month the central bank raised its key lending rate by a steep 1.5 percentage points to an annual 17 per cent.

Higher interest rates have plagued the stock market as investors have transferred money from the market to high-yielding fixed income investments.

Analysts said it would be a while before interest rates fall, even with the budget cuts.

"I don't think in the near term the central bank will lower interest rates because they have tried that sort of zigzagging in 1995. The bank will be much more cautious," Mr. Katz said.

The stock market opened barely changed Monday, following news of the budget programme.

Australia and New Zealand seen growing at 3.0 per cent — OECD

PARIS (AFP) — Output growth in Australia is expected to pick up in the second half of this year, for an average increase of between three and 3.25 per cent in gross domestic product (GDP) for 1996 and 1997, the OECD has said.

In New Zealand, continued tight monetary conditions should lead to "a more sustainable output growth rate of about three per cent on average this year and next," the organisation said in its half-yearly Economic Outlook.

Stronger growth in exports and the easing of the drought across most of eastern Australia are expected to offset the effects of weaker growth in the first six months of 1996.

Underlying inflation remains close to the three per cent upper limit of the authorities' target band, but is expected to drop to 2.5 per cent next year.

The current account deficit should decline from 5.5 per cent of GDP last year to 4.5 per cent in 1997. The OECD notes the continuing high number of job

offers and concludes that progress was made on the employment front in the first half of this year, although more slowly than in 1995.

In New Zealand, "underlying" inflation remains close to the upper limit of the reserve bank's target range and "monetary conditions will remain tight in

order to minimise the risk of a further breach of the inflation target."

This, the OECD said, should lead to more sustainable GDP growth despite the fact that tax cuts announced for mid-1996 and mid-1997 are likely to boost household spending.

Iran declares two Gulf ports 'special' economic zones

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran has turned two ports on the Gulf into "special" economic zones to compete for business with the Arab Gulf states, a senior official has said.

Morteza Alviri, the head of free-trade zone regions in Iran, did not clarify the

new status of Imamu Khomeini and Shahid Rejai ports, but said the move was a bid to attract some of the economic activities of free-trade zones in the Arab states across the Gulf, notably Jebel Ali in the United Arab Emirates.

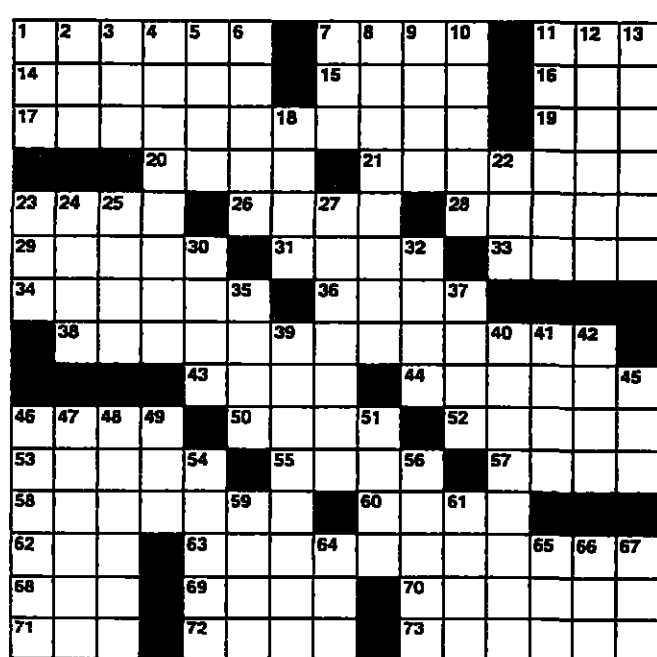
"Iran's foreign trade

presently carried out through third countries around the Gulf will be conducted directly" with countries of original destination, he told the Tehran Times.

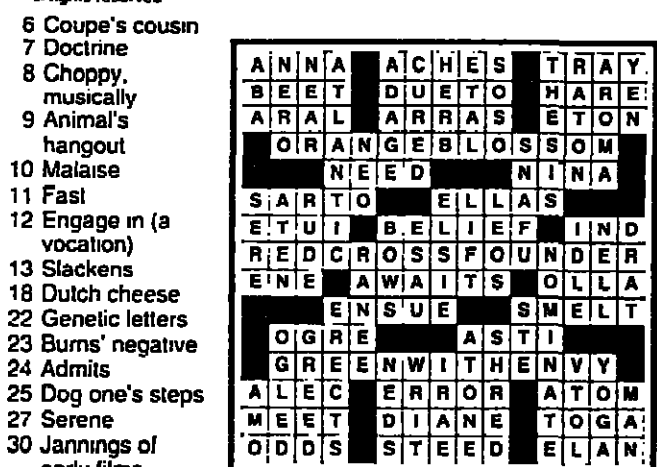
Iran already has three free-trade zones in the making on its southern coasts.

THE Daily Crossword by John Wolting

- ACROSS
- 1 Patterned cotton fabric
 - 7 Key
 - 11 Revitalization venue
 - 14 Each
 - 15 Oliver's pal
 - 16 Watering hole
 - 17 TRICKSTER'S FORTE
 - 19 Baseball stat.
 - 20 Old-fashioned brew
 - 21 Most uncouth
 - 22 Mark
 - 23 Junk copper
 - 28 — time (eventually)
 - 29 With it
 - 31 Spread
 - 33 Voice voles
 - 34 Mystery
 - 36 Suspend
 - 38 TRICKSTER'S FORTE
 - 43 Sheet
 - 44 Cleaned up
 - 46 Elementary particle
 - 50 Sedate
 - 52 Of a monthly cycle
 - 53 Emissary
 - 55 Promo
 - 57 Start for bug or finger
 - 58 Mammoth wave
 - 60 Indian musical form
 - 62 — Aviv
 - 63 TRICKSTER'S FORTE
 - 68 Spike or Peggy
 - 69 Massive
 - 70 Actress Vaccaro
 - 71 Nav. off.
 - 72 Exam
 - 73 Nova Scotia city



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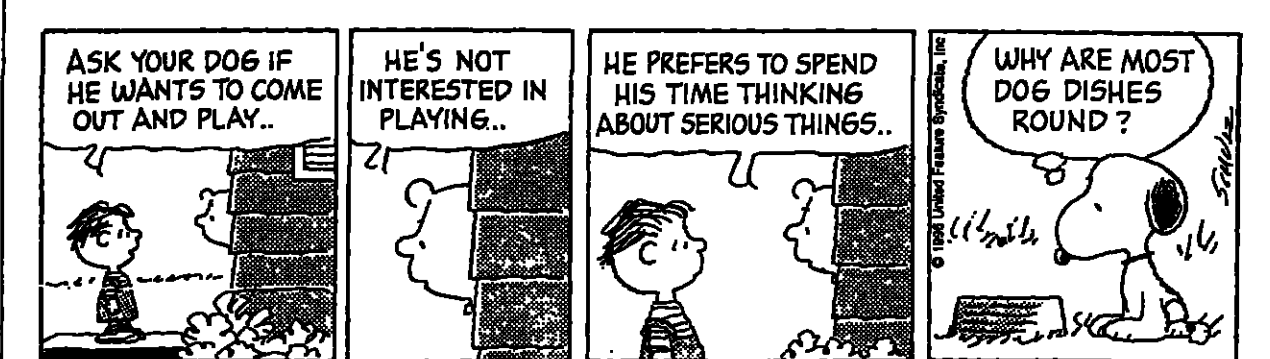


- DOWN
- 1 — de mer
 - 2 Zoo favorite
 - 3 Understand, slangily
 - 4 Appear again
 - 5 "God's Little —"
 - 6 Coupe's cousin
 - 7 Doctrine
 - 8 Choppy, musically
 - 9 Animal's hangout
 - 10 Malaise
 - 11 Fast
 - 12 Engage in (a vocation)
 - 13 Slackens
 - 18 Dutch cheese
 - 22 Genetic letters
 - 23 Burns' negative
 - 24 Admits
 - 25 Dog one's steps
 - 27 Serene
 - 30 Jannings of early films
 - 32 Lob
 - 35 Mellowed
 - 37 Donahue of TV
 - 39 Tiresome
 - 40 Iterations
 - 41 Foch or Simone
 - 42 Dull
 - 45 Matter-of-fact
 - 46 Fortitude
 - 47 Out of view
 - 48 Formative seeds
 - 49 Nice no?
 - 51 Master
 - 54 Leisure craft
 - 56 Dresses
 - 59 Disdainful pout
 - 61 Hart or Cooper
 - 64 Jewelry stone
 - 65 Lodge
 - 66 Pindaric
 - 67 Voice vote option

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SUNDAY JULY 14, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Worldly affairs can be handled early in the day today, so consult with someone in authority and seek his or her advice for the days ahead. Avoid moody friends this evening and stay home with your loved ones.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) A new contact can be of assistance today so don't rely too heavily upon a bigwig and you can get a new project completed. Later this evening will be good for you to meet with fellow associates and decide on the best course of action with business.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Be of assistance to your mate today in some monetary matter and he or she will appreciate the gesture. Plan how to later this evening to advance your career to its maximum potential and you will gain success.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Show loyalty towards close friends and loved ones today and show that you can be trustworthy and those who you come in contact with will show you respect. Don't disagree with your mate later this evening or there could be difficulty.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Get into those activities today which you can handle well and show others that you are capable to deal with any situation which materialises. Avoid outside commotion in the evening and everything with proceed smooth.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Make plans for entertainment which you've missed today and you can have fun with close friends. Steer clear of disagreements with fellow associates or you could get into difficulty with them over some new project.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) The morning today should be spent setting things around your home in order so that you can make your loved ones feel more comfortable. Don't spurge on expensive entertainment this evening or you will find yourself short.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Do invite guests in for the evening and you can all have a good time. This will be a good day today to consult with some bigwig and use whatever you are told to the fullest for you to be successful in the days ahead.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Plan how best to add to your assets today and you can be financially successful and secure for the days ahead if you put something aside. Exercise more care in driving on the highway, especially tonight when it counts.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to Jan. 20) Be more frugal and build up your bank account today so that there will be something in reserve for the lean times. Improve your appearance by rest and you can stay healthy, which will make you more efficient in the business world.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Please your mate today before handling personal affairs and you can retain harmony within your home environment. Improve your state of health later this evening and you will be able to handle any stressful situations.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Discuss with a close good friend today how to get ahead faster in the business and take what is said to heart. You will need to be thoughtful with your mate later this evening so that there aren't any disagreements present.

Birthstone of July: Ruby — Tiger's Eye

Business

Kuwait
Share
Trading in
first half
of '96
up \$5
billion

APRIL CITY — The Kuwait Stock Exchange closed at 1,004.50 points, up from 999.50 points at the end of the previous session. The five-year treasury bill was at 10.5 per cent.

MANAMA — The Bahrain Stock Exchange closed at 1,004.50 points, up from 999.50 points at the end of the previous session. The five-year treasury bill was at 10.5 per cent.

DOHA — The Qatar Stock Exchange closed at 1,004.50 points, up from 999.50 points at the end of the previous session. The five-year treasury bill was at 10.5 per cent.

RIYADH — The Saudi Stock Exchange closed at 1,004.50 points, up from 999.50 points at the end of the previous session. The five-year treasury bill was at 10.5 per cent.

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Jaloun San Rock Hotel

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Professors
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our shop
• JUL
also 31
• FFA
ment
Shedden
Bank, P
Swedish

OLYMPIA SWIMMING
• TENNIS
• HEALTH
• GYMNASIA
• RACQUET
• RACQUET

Kuwait share trading in first half of '96 tops \$5 billion

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Trading values on the Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) in the first half of 1996 topped \$5 billion and were accompanied by a 17 per cent rise in the main share index, KSE figures have showed.

The total value of shares traded in the first six months of 1996 was 1,530 million dinars (\$5.1 billion), compared with 1,320 million dinars (\$4.4 billion) for the second half of 1995, the KSE said.

The KSE index rose 17 per cent in the first half of 1996 to 1,595.8, as 41 of the 57 listed companies saw their share values increase against eight stocks which lost ground. The remaining eight companies were unmoved.

Investors focused their activities on the banking sector, which accounted for more than 40 per cent of the total value of shares traded, while the real estate sector was the next favourite accounting for 20 per cent of the total.

KSE General Manager Hisham Al Otaibi told AFP in a recent interview that trading at the end of 1996 could top \$10 billion, compared with almost \$6.5 billion during 1995 and only \$1.5 billion in 1994.

He said several factors have boosted investors' confidence in the market, including the sell-off of government stakes in several local companies and the introduction at the end of 1995 of an electronic trading system.

Kuwaiti shares are open to investors from the Gulf Cooperation Council states, which alongside Kuwait, includes Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. However, the banking and insurance sectors are restricted to Kuwaiti citizens.

Foreign investors from outside the Gulf are allowed to invest in three listed mutual funds.

Lloyd's unveils record profits

LONDON (R) — Lloyd's of London has unveiled record profits of nearly 1.1 billion pounds (\$1.71 billion), returning to the black in spectacular style after five years of heavy losses.

The insurance market's chairman, David Rowland, said the 1993 pure profit of 1.084 billion pounds was one of the best trading results in Lloyd's 308 year history. Lloyd's reports three years in arrears to allow time to process claims.

The result was influenced by a very strong upward movement in rates, combined with a low incidence of major catastrophes.

The return to profit after five years of losses which totalled more than 8.0 billion pounds and threatened the market's future, is a significant boost for Lloyd's.

Mr. Rowland is trying to

win significant majority support among the market's 34,000 investors worldwide for proposals to reinsure the past losses into a new company called Equitas.

They are due to vote on a recovery plan at Lloyd's annual meeting on Monday and Lloyd's needs their backing at this and subsequent votes held by action groups representing investors if it is to pass a solvent test at the end of August.

"I believe that on Monday the members will indeed vote in large measure for supporting the propositions put before them," Mr. Rowland told BBC Radio Four. "But it's a democratic system and on Monday they'll have to make up their minds."

He said the recovery plan, which includes a 3.1 billion pound settlement package

to offset the cost of reinsuring the market's losses, is the only viable option open to investors or names — the individuals who have traditionally backed Lloyd's.

The recovery plan, if implemented, will further strengthen the market. "The removal of debt arising from uncalled or unpaid losses will put security behind Lloyd's policies on a stronger basis," Mr. Rowland said in a statement accompanying the results. The proposed reinsurance of the market's 1992 and prior liabilities into Equitas created opportunities for continued profitable business.

"This strengthened security provides a platform for increasing the confidence of existing clients and winning new customers from all parts of the world," the chairman of Lloyd's said.

Lloyd's chief executive Ron Sandler said the 1993 account had "reaped the benefit of significant improvements in rating and policy conditions to produce a record profit".

He noted all four main market areas had produced significantly improved results for the 1993 year.

Non-marine results of 881 million pounds, for example, enjoyed a steep fall in the number of catastrophes. Rates in the property catastrophe reinsurance sector rose dramatically and underwriting terms and conditions improved worldwide, Lloyd's said.

The results follow an agreement signed on Thursday with U.S. authorities which Lloyd's hopes will remove the final significant obstacle to its recovery plan.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
AMMAN - JORDAN											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 13/07/1996											
PART	12	12	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALUE	OPEN	CLOSE	CHANGE
	HIGH	LOW				SHARES	SHARES	TRADED	PRICE	PRICE	
250.000	205.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	11.9	1.81	1	27	4340	214.00	217.00	3.00
1.340	.900	.900	MCD. EAST INV. PK.	59.1	0.00	6	24-0	2280			
8.180	4.250	4.250	THE BOCCING BK.	12.6	0.00	4	263252	113276	4.25	4.35	.09
3.040	2.600	2.600	JOR. KOWAT BANK	19.7	0.00	4	3880	357	2.71	2.71	.02
1.240	.900	.900	JOR. GULF BANK	5.7	7.37	8	1315	357	2.71	2.71	.02
4.180	3.180	3.180	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.2	0.00	6	1150	436	3.52	3.60	.08
3.720	2.340	2.340	BULY AL-NAB (BETTER)	7.5	0.00	4	1950	1034	2.34	2.42	.08
1.130	.312	.312	ADHAN INV. PK.	9	0.00	28	2688	35	3.35	3.35	.02
1.740	1.000	1.000	PHILADELPHIA INV. PK.	5	0.00	22	11985	13269	1.04	1.13	.09
MARK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 170.77 CHNG: +1.37 105 370273 1283556											
4.410	4.000	4.000	JERUSALEM UNIV.	11.7	4.65	1	80	215	4.20	4.30	.10
2.910	2.1250	2.1250	JOR. FREEMAN INVR.	6.2	9.05	1	1480	309	2.12	2.21	.09
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 125.85 CHNG: +0.59 6 1800 3420											
1.900	1.450	1.450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	10.5	7.95	40	14528	32419	1.47	1.52	.04
2.300	1.080	1.080	MATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	3	750	885	1.22	1.18	.04
1.160	.900	.900	REAL ESTATE INV.	21.1	3.2	2	110	713	.93	.95	.02
2.460	1.780	1.780	MED. EAST HOTELS	80.6	0.00	20	10000	10928	1.87	1.87	.01
1.430	.960	.960	SARKA EDUCATION	9	0.00	3	3252	3250	.87	1.00	.13
2.450	1.700	1.700	UNIFIED CO.	9.8	5.35	43	12752	21697	1.78	1.82	.04
1.200	.820	.820	UNION LAND DEV.	6	0.00	6	2260	1079	.92	.97	.05
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 112.30 CHNG: +1.11 119 47568 88836											
1.810	3.060	3.060	JOR. COMBAT PACT.	18.2	3.12	16	2775	9435	3.09	3.15	.06
3.500	2.750	2.750	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	12.2	0.00	7	669	1993	2.81	2.93	.12
1.960	4.750	4.750	ARAB POTASH INVR.	25.3	0.00	10	860	1860	4.75	4.97	.22
10.560	8.720	8.720	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.0	0.00	38	7111	19278	8.82	8.92	.10
3.750	2.280	2.280	INDUSTRIAL COM. SER.	30.7	0.00	2	312	714	2.28	2.28	.00
3.300	3.100	3.100	ARAB FREEMAN INVR.	18.2	6.02	33	11030	36751	3.18	3.22	.04
6.450	5.690	5.690	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	4.27	1	300	755	570	5.88	5.93	.05
3.310	2.500	2.500	GENERAL KINING	6.7	11.45	2	250	661	2.60	2.62	.02
2.530	1.400	1.400	RAVER INDUSTRIES	9	0.00	1	250	380	1.40	1.52	.12
8.000	4.390	4.390	DAR ALDHAR INV. PK.	12.6	4.22	13	5550	21419	4.40	4.62	.22
7.940	4.800	4.800	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	12.23	0.00	49	77252	36308	4.85	4.97	.12
1.300	1.000	1.000	ARAB WATER CONTNTR.	9.15	0.00	7	8830	9635	1.04	1.12	.08
2.720	1.210	1.210	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	7	2350	2904	1.21	1.42	.21
1.210	.660	.660	NATIONAL INDS.	10.2	8.70	21	9785	6688	.67	.69	.02
2.310	1.060	1.060	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	70	34523	4588	1.06	1.27	.21
4.950	2.650	2.650	ROYAL CARPET WARE. MOVC	10.3	0.00	4	3000	6485	3.33	3.37	.04
1.660	.830	.830	JOR. SULPHO-CHEM.	9	0.00	5	2050	2843	.86	.90	.04
2.240	1.080	1.080	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	25.3	0.00	9	4750	6113	1.08	1.35	.27
1.160	.750	.750	UNIV. MOVC. CHEM.	8.5	10.75	5	21800	29752	1.22	1.36	.14
2.170	1.140	1.140	JOR. INDS. RESOURCES	16.2	0.00	40	17400	22570	1.23	1.29	.06
1.900	.950	.950	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	28.0	0.00	52	25800	26784	.98	1.03	.05
2.460	1.750	1.750	MU. - RAY WYAT MEAR	9	0.00	2	590	800	.78	.80	.02
1.490	1.090	1.090	INTL. TOMATCH	27.3	0.00	25	17320	19994	1.11	1.16	.05
2.230	1.130	1.130	UNION CR. & VIAL.	29.1	0.00	3	600	708	1.13	1.18	.05
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 105.51 CHNG: +1.40 469 248911 327299											
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 137.89 CHNG: +1.35 694 66491 1583105											
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 13/07/1996											
PART	12	12	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALUE	OPEN	CLOSE	CHANGE
	HIGH	LOW				SHARES	SHARES	TRADED	PRICE	PRICE	
1.810	.420	.420	JOR. TRADE PACT.	17.6	0.00	12	10250	6788	.65	.66	.01
1.960	.600	.600	MATL. COMMER. CENTERS	2	0.00	1	120	66	.69	.66	.03
1.000	.700	.700	UNION INV. CO.	69.8	0.00	9	8544	1859	.73	.73	.00
1.200	.350	.350	ARAB PTE. INVR.	10	0.00	10	520	3038	.35	.36	.01
1.650	.340	.340	JOR. INDS. MATCH-JEMCO	0	0.00	4	9250	4415	.48	.47	.01
1.280	1.040	1.040	UNIV. L. NETALS	2	0.00	1	12000	12300	1.04	1.00	.04
1.000	.610	.610	ARAB FOOD & MED.	2	0.00	1	1500	7666	1.00	1.27	.27
1.870	1.370	1.370	NATL. CHEMIST	2	0.00	13	5272	7666	1.40	1.47	.07
.790	.520	.520	ARAB INTL. INV. TRN.	9	0.00	3	850	248	.52	.54	.02
1.160	.580	.580	MATL. TEXTILE	2	0.00	15	8438	5446	.64	.67	.03
1.100	.620	.620	ROYAL CARPET WARE. MOVC	10.3	0.00	14	22100	17804	.67	.67	.00
1.030	.670	.670	RAYEAK DIES & NOVELS	2	0.00	11	7078	2760	.67	.64	.03
1.060	.770	.770	JORDAN STEEL	2	0.00	5	15800	25852	1.15	1.19	.04
1.000	.620	.620	RIJADAT PRINCE 752	2	0.00	10	4200	385	.65	.68	.03
1.720	1.100	1.100	UNION TOBACCO 753	2	0.00	11	7078	2760	.67	.64	.03
.580	.440	.440	MATL. PETRUM. 552	29.0	0.00	25	26150	12791	.45	.47	.02
.510	.440	.440	INDS. INV.	2	0.00	6	4500	3662	.78	.82	.04
1.480	.770	.770	INDS. CERAMIC	2	0.00	6	2000	800	.65	.65	.00
.970	.680	.680	NATL. POULTRY 754	2	0.00	28	29055	24724	.68	.69	.01
1.500	.530	.530	MED. EAST COMPLEX	6.9	0.00	28	29055	24724	.56	.59	.03
GRAND TOTAL 183 173632 113600											

DAILY BUSINESS BEAT

A review of news from the Arabic press

National Cable & Wire Manufacturing Company hikes sales but net profit drops

** DESPITE INCREASING sales by 16.6 per cent, from JD13.2 million in 1994 to JD15.4 million in 1995, the net profit generated by the National Cable & Wire Manufacturing Company fell by 48 per cent to JD 843,700 at the end of last year.

Mohammad Zurqiyeh, the company's board chairman, attributed the decline to increased obligation on the firm as a result of the expansion plan which was announced in the previous year and which cost \$3 million. In addition, he said, the profitability was hit by the high rise in the prices of raw materials and the stiff competition.

Mr. Zurqiyeh said that non-Jordanian companies from neighbouring countries were able to acquire quite a share in the local market as a result of dumping their products here at crash prices. Consequently, he added, "we are forced to lower our prices so as not to lose the local market under the pressure of these companies."

The chairman told the general assembly as he reviewed the company's 1995 performance that traditional markets remained closed last year. Noting also that Egypt has banned imports of cables and wires and that Saudi Arabia was not allowing the usage of imported cables in its projects, Mr. Zurqiyeh said those were other factors that had a big negative effect on the company's profitability.

He indicated that great difficulties were faced as the company tried to open new markets as each one had its old traditional supplier or its engagements for imports and financing. On top of this, the markets were enjoying protection from their governments against foreign competition, Mr. Zurqiyeh pointed out.

The general assembly adjourned after approving the board recommendation to retain the earnings to consolidate the company's financial situation (Al Aswaq & Al Doustour).

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates					Prices as at 13/07/96 18:55				
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar		1.5230	0.6448	1.2585	110.85	1.3693	1533.08	1.7099	5.1560
DE Mark	0.6566		0.4229	0.8261	72.76	8.0864	1005.96	1.1225	3.3847
GB Sterling	1.5509	1.5509		1.5497	172.00	2.1236	2377.65	2.6519	7.9964
CH Franc	0.7946	0.7946	0.5119		86.06	0.0875	1217.70	135.73	4.0993
JP Yen	0.0090	1.3733	0.5812	1.1348		1.2345	13.82	154.1800	4.6492
CAD Dollar	0.7303	0.3110	0.7011	0.7011	1.2345		1119.00	1.2464	3.7603
IT Lira	0.0007	0.9932	0.4023	0.8821	1384.85	0.8928		11.15	3.3623
NL Guilder	0.2540	82.04	0.3709	72.58	61.78	0.0905	896.33		3.0145
FR Franc	0.1636	0.2493	0.1150	24.3990	21.47	0.2654	33.14	33.1500	

Michael Jordan signs \$25 million deal

CHICAGO (AFP) — Michael Jordan signed the richest contract in team sports history here Friday, a reported \$25 million pact to play next season for the Chicago Bulls.

Jordan led the Bulls to the fourth National Basketball Association title in six years last month, completing his return to the top after an 17-month retirement.

Jordan had just completed an eight-year, \$24 million contract by winning his eighth scoring title at 30.4 points a game, the season and playoff Most Valuable Player awards and leading Chicago to a record 72-win season.

Negotiations between Jordan agent David Falk and owner Jerry Reinsdorf lasted only an hour, giving Jordan time to spend the afternoon playing golf.

"For the most part, everything I've had conversations with Jerry, we were very positive about it," Jordan said. "So it didn't leave me any thought to think elsewhere or think differently."

"I think my agent may have considered other things because that's his job, he has to research and see what the options may be."

But me, I always thought I would be in Chicago."

Jordan would not confirm the value of the deal, saying it was none of the public's business. That same public brought him \$40 million in endorsement contracts last year by purchasing products he advertises.

The signing came less than 24 hours after a ban on contract signings was lifted when owners and the players' union agreed on a new labour deal through 2001.



Michael Jordan of the Chicago Bulls

"We are delighted that the discussions with Michael and his representatives were able to be concluded rapidly," Reinsdorf said. "Once we were able to speak, the total elapsed time of our phone calls was less than one hour."

Jordan followed the lead of Chicago coach Phil Jackson, who signed a one-year deal last month for \$2.5 million. Jordan had said he would not stay without Jackson, gaining the support of Chicago fans to his cause.

"This contract is a testimony to Michael's unique contribution to the Chicago Bulls franchise, the United Center and the City of Chicago," said Falk. "The

time frame in which it was finalized reflects the special relationship Michael has developed with Jerry Reinsdorf the past 11 years."

Reinsdorf said Jordan only wanted a one-year deal.

"Michael asked for a one-year contract because he never wants to play if he is unable to meet his own high standards," Reinsdorf said. "This way, Michael and the Bulls will be able to discuss what is appropriate for each subsequent season."

"Michael's desire for a one-year contract is refreshing in this era where athletes often seek to be paid beyond their productive years."

Seles, Davenport give U.S. lead over Japan

NAGOYA (AFP) — Monica Seles made a Fed Cup debut in style here Saturday, leading the United States to a 2-0 lead over Japan with Lindsay Davenport in the World Group semifinals.

The world co-number one, who has been struggling with a shoulder problem throughout this season, showed no ill-effects from the injury, scoring a 6-2, 6-2 win over Japan's number two player, Ai Sugiyama in the second singles match.

"It felt great," said Seles, who had dreamed of representing the United States since she was 13. "I was very nervous before I walked onto the court, but it was just great. I played some great tennis."

"Everything went very well for the whole team out there today and it's just better keep doing that tomorrow," she added.

Sunday will see the two reverse singles, followed by a doubles in the best-of-five women's team competition.

In the opening match on the indoor supreme court at the Rainbow Hall in Nagoya, Davenport took a 6-2, 6-1 victory to shock Japan's number one Kimiko Date.

Date, who upset world number one Steffi Graf to beat Germany in the first round, took the first two games in the first set and the first of the second set before losing six consecutive games in each of them.

"Tennis in the first set was very good. I don't think she (Date) played bad," said Davenport, ranked 10th against Date's ninth in the world.

Date said, "Lindsay didn't make many errors. If I could have made the score closer, maybe she would have made more errors, but I couldn't and she just kept her rhythm till the end. She won all the important points."

Davenport, who also knocked Date out of the French Open in the fourth round, stretched her record against the Japanese ace to 5-3 in major tournaments.

"Lindsay and Monica would have beaten anybody in the world today," said Billie Jean King, the U.S. team captain.

Cardinals hit seven homers to beat Cubs

CHICAGO (R) — Ron Gant and Gary Gaetti hit two home runs apiece as the St. Louis Cardinals tied a 56-year-old team record with seven homers en route to a 13-3 victory over the Chicago Cubs Friday.

The Cardinals, who set a season high with 18 hits, tied the club mark previously set on May 7, 1940 against the Brooklyn Dodgers.

Cubs starter Steve Trachsel (7-6) surrendered seven runs and nine hits in four innings. Trachsel gave up four homers as Chicago allowed seven homers for the first time since 1976.

"I was impressed from top to bottom," Trachsel said of the Cards' lineup. "They seemed to have a good feeling for what I was going to do. It was a strange day. I felt I had good stuff when I went out there, but it turned into a long, ugly day."

In Los Angeles, Tim Lincecum pitched a shutout for his over 23 innings and Mike Piazza and Greg Gagne each homered and drove in two runs as the Western Division-leading Dodgers extended the San Francisco Giants' losing streak to seven games with a 6-1 victory.

Los Angeles sent the Giants to their 12th consecutive road loss and their 17th defeat in 19 games overall.

At Colorado, Vinny Castilla hit two homers, including a grand slam that highlighted an 11-run seventh inning, as the Rockies overcame a seven-run deficit for a wild 13-12 victory over the San Diego Padres in a game interrupted twice, by hail and rain.

In Atlanta, Chipper Jones hit a two-run homer to key a three-run seventh and Tom Glavine allowed three runs in seven innings as the Braves rallied for a 6-3 victory over the Florida Marlins.

In Cincinnati, Mark Portugal won his fifth straight start and Eddie Taubensee homered to cap a three-run first as the Reds beat the Pittsburgh Pirates 5-2 to snap a three-game losing streak.

In Montreal, Terry Mulholland scattered nine hits for his second complete game this season and Todd Zeile smacked a two-run first-inning homer as the Philadelphia Phillies beat the Expos 5-3 for their fifth win in six games.

Red Sox rout Detroit Tigers; Mariners edge Angels

DETROIT (R) — All-Star Mo Vaughn hit a grand slam and Tigers nemesis Reggie Jefferson drove in four runs as the Boston Red Sox routed Detroit 11-3 for their seventh win in eight games Friday.

Vaughn's sixth career grand slam — a 450-foot blast to center field — came off Tigers starter Omar Olivares (4-6) and gave the Red Sox a 7-0 lead in the second inning. He also scored three times and lifted his batting average to .344 with 27 homers and 82 RBI.

"I make adjustments every day," Vaughn said. "I was up there trying to get good, solid swings and hit the ball in the air to drive in one run. When you do that and make a good swing, the ball carries for you."

Jefferson continued pulverizing the Tigers' pitching by doubling in two runs to cap a three-run first and single in a pair for a 9-3 lead in the sixth. In eight games against Detroit, Jefferson is 16-for-26 with six homers and 16 RBI.

"It's just something I can't explain," Jefferson said. "I've never been this hot against a team."

Starter Tom Gordon (7-4) allowed three runs and six hits over seven innings for his second straight win.

"Whatever you guys wrote last night, just double it," said frustrated manager Buddy Bell, whose Tigers lost 11-4 Thursday. "We're going to get a pitcher up here tomorrow night. I just don't know who it will be."

At Minnesota, Brian Giles hit a ninth-inning, game-tying, two-run pinch homer and Jim Thome singled in two runs for the win as the Cleveland Indians overcame five errors to hand the Twins their fourth consecutive loss, 7-5.

Graf's father to stand trial

BONN (R) — A German court said Friday it had granted prosecutors' request to put tennis star Steffi Graf's father and one of his financial advisers on trial for tax evasion.

The court in Mannheim said the trial of Peter Graf and Joachim Eckardt would probably start in the first half of September, but said the exact date still had to be settled.

"At the same time the arrest order against Mr. Graf was maintained after a hearing and his bid to have it lifted was rejected," the court said in a statement.

Graf and Eckardt stand accused of evading taxes on 42 million marks (\$27.6 million) of the world number one's income for the tax years 1989 to 1993. They face up to 10 years in jail if found guilty of bilking state coffers of more than 19 million marks in taxes.

Steffi Graf has also been a target of the massive probe, one of Germany's biggest in recent years, but prosecutors have said they have no reason to detain her.

The Wimbledon champion has said she knew little about her financial affairs, trust-

ing her father and his advisers.

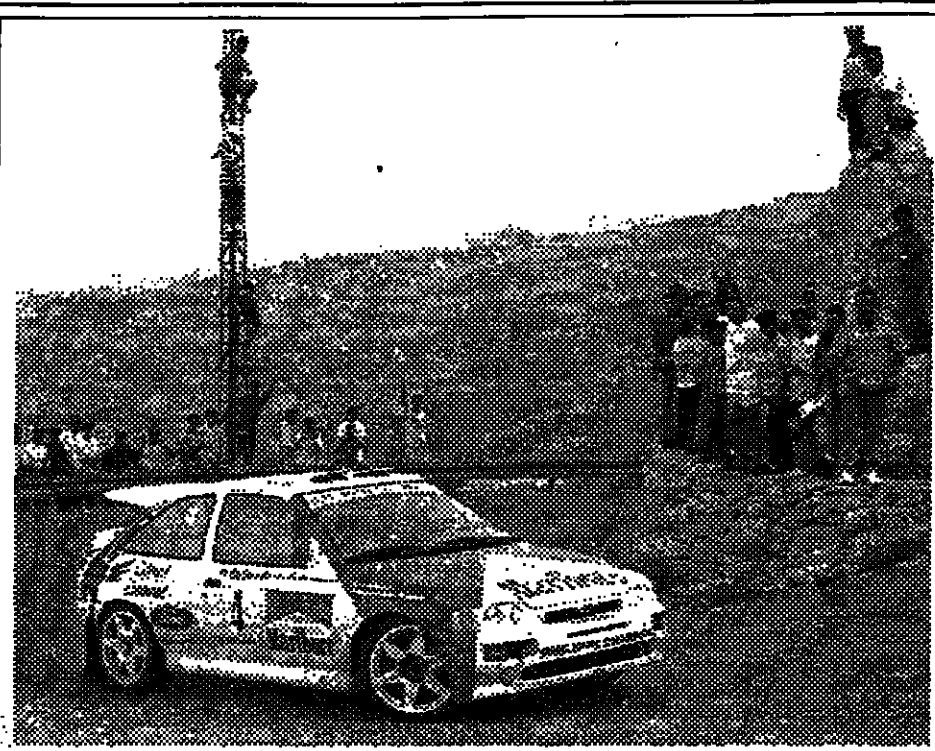
A former used car salesman who has handled his daughter's financial affairs since her childhood, Peter Graf has been in investigative custody in a Mannheim jail since August.

Prosecutors have blocked several bids by his lawyers to get him released, saying he could alter evidence or flee the country. Eckardt has been behind bars since September.

The probe into the Graf family finances began in April last year when investigators raided the homes of Steffi Graf and her father in southwest Germany last May, seizing several documents.

German media have reported every twist and turn in the case, and reduced the tennis star to tears with their questioning on several occasions.

But Steffi Graf has largely been able to put her troubles to one side on the tennis court. Despite the challenge of a resurgent Monica Seles, she has held on to the top spot in women's tennis.



Mohammad Ben Sulayem drives his Ford Escort Cosworth through the Jebel mountains in northern Lebanon during the first day of the 20th Lebanese Marlboro Rally (Reuters photo)

Costa stuns Kafelnikov in Swiss Open

ST. GALLEN, Switzerland (AFP) — Spain's Alberto Costa stunned top seed Yevgeny Kafelnikov 3-6, 6-4, 6-3 here Saturday in the semifinals of the \$560,000 Swiss Open.

It was the first defeat of the reigning French Open holder on clay since May at the World Team Cup in Dusseldorf.

Costa, who has only one career title from four finals on his favoured clay, broke in the fourth game of the final set to put the world No. 5 from Russia on the defensive at the high-altitude event in the Swiss Alps.

The 21-year-old Spaniard, ranked 18th on the ATP Tour list, saved a break point in the seventh game with an ace and clinched his place in the final two games later when the holder netted a return.

Czech Rhyndak Ulihrach was playing Felix Mantilla of Spain in the second semifinal to determine an opponent for Costa, whose only career crown came at Kitzbuehel, also in the mountains, last year. "I lost to Sergi Bruguera in the second round here last year, so this is by far a bet-

ter tournament for me," said Costa, highest ranked among Spanish men.

"I have only one title, but I'm now hoping to make it two. I've had bad luck in finals, I've played world number two Thomas Muster three times."

After winning the opening set, Kafelnikov found himself in his first real fight of the post-Wimbledon week.

The Russian fell into a hole in the second set when Costa broke for 5-3 as Kafelnikov double-faulted.

But the holder regained the offensive in the next game, breaking back to 4-5 when Costa missed a stretch return.

The Spaniard produced another break in the next game, though, firing a backhand winner down the line to level the sets at one each.

"I like the altitude," said Costa, an early loser at the French Open and a finalist at the Monte Carlo Open. "It makes my strokes more powerful and helps my serve."

Costa missed a stretch return. The Spaniard produced another break in the next game, though, firing a backhand winner down the line to level the sets at one each.

In Milwaukee, Pat Listach drove in a career-high four runs and Ben McDonald won his sixth straight decision as the Brewers bombed the Toronto Blue Jays 12-5.

Listach, who returned from the disabled list Thursday, had a two-run single to cap a three-run fifth inning and knocked in a pair of runs with a double to start a six-run second.

McDonald (10-3) allowed two runs and three hits with four walks and four strikeouts in six innings.

Erik Hanson (8-11) was bombed for seven runs and eight hits with three walks in two-plus innings.

John Olerud and Carlos Delgado homered for the Blue Jays. John Jaha homered for Milwaukee.

In Kansas City, Tony Phillips reached base five times and Kevin Tapani allowed three runs over 6 1/3 innings to lead the Chicago White Sox past the Royals 7-6.

Tapani (9-5) allowed five hits, three walks and struck out six. Roberto Hernandez retired the final four batters for his 27th save.

The game in Baltimore between the New York Yankees and Orioles was postponed due to rain.

U.S. Olympians rout Aussies 118-77

SALT LAKE CITY (AFP) — Charles Barkley is already showing Olympic rivals and the Atlanta Games are still nearly a week away.

Barkley shoved Australian centre Shane Heal during the United States Olympic basketball team's 118-77 rout of Australia here Friday.

Reggie Miller led "Dream Team III" with 19 points, going 8-of-8 from the field.

The outspoken Barkley, who traded punches and accusations in a bar fight last week, led the 1992 Olympic champions in scoring and was remembered for elbowing an Angolan rival in the chest.

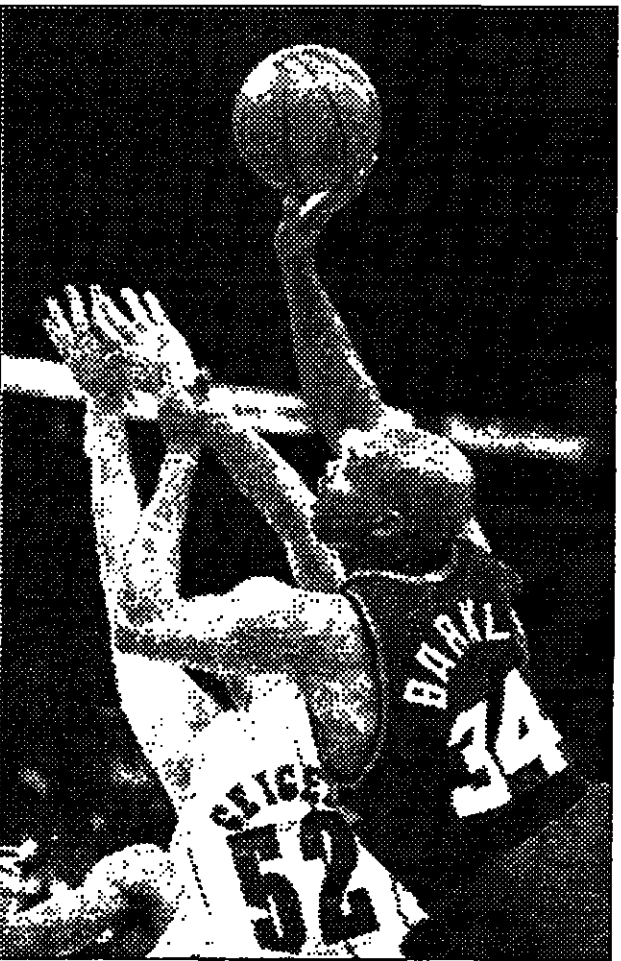
Heal scored 28 points, including eight three-point baskets, to become the most prolific scorer against the U.S. squad. That made Heal the latest target for "Sir Charles."

"He just took my legs out, and I said a few words to him, and he replied," Heal said. "That's part of the game. We came here expecting to play the best players in the world but we're not going to back down. I think Charles respected that."

The latest collection of National Basketball Association stars struggled to a six-point victory in their exhibition opener against a U.S. under-23 squad, rallying from a 17-point deficit to win by six.

Since then they have routed Brazil by 47 points, China by 61 and the Aussies by 41 with their exhibition series finale against Greece on Sunday in Indianapolis.

Shaquille O'Neal scored 18 points and Mitch



Charles Barkley tries to avoid an opponent as he moves towards the basket

Richmond added 16 for "Dream Team III." Utah Jazz star Karl Malone had 14 points in front of his home fans. John Stockton, his Utah and Olympic teammate, added five.

"It's a good group of guys," Stockton said. "We're getting to know each other a lot better, and it's been fun."

Former NBA player Andrew Gaze added 11 points for the Australians,

who shot 42 per cent and were outrebounded 37-24. The Aussies were without center Luc Longley, who is recovering from ankle surgery following his role in Chicago's NBA title season.

"I felt that their rebounding and their transition (was the difference)," Australian coach Barry Barnes said. "At times I thought our players were in position to at least get in the way."

TODAY AT	PHILADELPHIA Mel Gibson & Sophie Marceau in Braveheart winner of 6 Academy Awards Shows: 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00	PLAZA Layla Elwi...in Ya Dunya Ya Gharami (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 Toy Story 5:00 p.m.	CONCORD Mel Gibson & Sophie Marceau in Braveheart winner of 6 Academy Awards Shows: 1:00, 5:00, 8:30 CONCORD "2" Braveheart Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 (film duration-3 hours)	Hammond Theatre & Cinema TEL: 618274-818275 Today presents Zawad Weld Awad theatre group in the play entitled Five-Star Government Starring comedians: Mahmoud Saimah & Hussein Tubeishat play starts 8:30 p.m.	Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155 PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights at 8:30 p.m. For reservation please call 625155 - 640155
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"We're here to de-stress

Sports

Olympic village keeps athletes busy all day

ATLANTA (R) — Romance may blossom in the Olympic village but most athletes are more interested in chasing medals.

About 10,000 competitors sitting around in the sun prompted the Atlanta Journal to forecast: "Whoopie could become an unofficial Olympic sport in the village."

But Indian hockey player Gavin Ferreira had his eyes firmly set on the tournament ahead. "It's too early for any romance to blossom. Competition is too tough and anyway I'm not looking," he said.

Romance apart, the village has enough free attractions to keep athletes happy 24 hours a day.

The homesick can head for the surf shack and link into the internet to send messages wherever they want.

Music fans can look forward to a string of top flight concerts from rap artist II Cool J to the reggae beat of Ziggy Marley.

Athletes from 197 countries are queuing up for treatment at the massage parlour where aromatherapy specialist Patty Beggs said: "We want them to feel good and focused."

The laser video games room is packed with athletes soaring through space on a

virtual reality hang glider or skiing on a black run.

They can indulge in a game of Q-zar, a kind of laser tag played out in a luminous green and orange maze. Mexicans are playing poles, Ukrainians challenging Australians.

Willie Banks, a former triple jumper and veteran of four Olympics, knows all about the tensions of competition. That's why, as head of entertainment in the village, he is determined they should all have a chance to wind down.

For the spiritually minded, services are on offer for Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism.

Political sensitivities are borne in mind. Palestinians and Israelis, Iraqis and Kuwaitis are not housed in the same apartment blocks. "You can be confident they won't be room mates," said one official.

The village offers no alcohol but the nights can still be lively enough.

The foam bath in the village disco is proving a big hit as athletes disappear under a mound of bubbles.

And for those who might be tempted to cross a few international barriers, Dr. Boyd Eaton at the village clinic always keeps condoms readily available.



Mike Laganella installs a crowd control fence at an entrance to Atlanta's Olympic Stadium as preparations for the Olympics continue. The site will be used for the opening ceremonies July 19 (Reuters photo)

COUNTDOWN TO ATLANTA

Jordan's delegation leaves today

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan's delegation to the Summer Olympics leaves Amman today (Sunday) to join athletes from all over the world in the centennial Olympic Games which open in Atlanta July 19.

Six athletes will represent Jordan in four sports: Fakhruddin Foad (high jump), Nada Kassar (shot put and discus), Mira Ghneim (judo), and Mohammad Al Qasem (target shooting).

The delegation officials are headed by Minister of Youth Mohammad Daoudieh and Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC) Secretary-General Dr. Mouaffaq Al Fawwaz. The head of delegation is Dr. Ismat Al Kurdi and the team manager Mohammad Darwish. The 16-member delegation also includes coaches Ziyad Qsous, Khamis Ghaith, Omar Asiri, Arthur Warvil and Khaled Rifa'i.

In an interview with the Jordan Times, Dr. Kurdi voiced hope the Kingdom's participation in the Games this time would be a starting point towards a more concerted, systematic method of preparation for such international events in order to achieve acceptable results.

"While we hope that our athletes will improve their records and gain much needed experience, I feel that the focus in the upcoming phase will be on preparing junior players way ahead of any participation."

He noted that the Minister of Youth, upon instructions from His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, was emphasizing the need to start preparations early for the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

The Kingdom's participation in the biggest sports event of the century is limited to six athletes as earlier set by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Since Jordan, among a host of other countries did not actually qualify for any of the events through competition or athletes' individual records, the Kingdom's athletes will be taking part in the Games according to IOC criteria.

JOC Secretary-General Dr. Mouaffaq Al Fawwaz explained the nature of participation saying countries that do not meet eligibility requirements are given the chance to compete in sports which have open slots for less competitive athletes.

Dr. Fawwaz also echoed the points made by Dr. Kurdi noting the need to start preparation early and providing athletes with complete facilities to ensure optimum readiness for such international competitions.

The JOC only finalised the participating sports and athletes in March while judo and shooting later got wild cards later on. Training camps were also all completed during the past three weeks.

*Fakhruddin Foad (high jump): While he will be taking part in the Olympics for the second time, he is the only one among the athletes not to have attended a training camp abroad and his training was limited to local competitions in which he failed to break his own record.

*Nada Kassar (shot put and discus): She has been on a training programme with her U.S. coach in California where she currently resides.

*Mohammad Al Qasem (shooting): He recently came back from a five-day training camp in Cyprus.

*Walid Al Awazem (judo): Al Awazem who recently returned from a training camp in Syria will be the delegation's flag bearer in the opening ceremony. He will compete in the under-95 kilogramme category.

Jordan's participation in the Atlanta Olympics will be the fifth after taking part in the past four in

Crown Prince sees off athletes

AMMAN (J.T.) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan Saturday met the six athletes of Jordan's Olympic team which heads for Atlanta Sunday and wished them success in their endeavours and competitions with world athletes.

Expressing hope that this participation in the Atlanta Olympics will be a prelude for Jordanian athletes to participate in greater numbers in the 2000 Sydney Olympics, the Crown Prince said that increased efforts on the part of the Ministry of Youth and other concerned parties should be exerted to qualify more Jordanian athletes to take part in international championships.

"The creation of champions requires great care to be given to their talents so that they can raise their country's name and flag among those of the world through free and fair competitions in sports events," Prince Hassan said in a brief statement to the group gathered at the Al Hussein Youth City.

He stressed that only through continued practice and due attention to promoting the skills of athletes can Jordan achieve a greater name in the world of sports.

He also noted the importance of the media's role in its coverage of the Jordanian team and the athletes' performance in the world's biggest sports gathering.

Minister of Youth Mohammad Daoudieh, who will join the delegation in Atlanta said that Jordan takes pride in its national athletes and team who reflect a bright image of their country and nation.

Barcelona 92, Seoul 88, Los Angeles 84 and Moscow 80.

The Atlanta Olympics are the biggest Games in history as a record number of 197 nations will be competing. The maximum number of athletes has been set at 10,000.

Record of Jordan's past participations

Moscow 1980: Jordan took part in only one event, target shooting. The delegation comprised 34 members including 18 athletes. As Jordan participated alongside 10 countries, the athletes were: Abdul Majid Abdel Qader, Mohammad Samir, Hussein Fares, Nayef Abdul Qader, Rafe F. Fader, Ziyad Fari, Amir Barakat, Khamis Ghaith, Mohammad Shalhat and Under Shalhat.

Los Angeles 1984: The Kingdom's participation in the Games was limited to 10 countries. Jordan competed in shooting, judo, and athletics. The athletes were: Abdul Majid Abdel Qader, Rafe F. Fader, Ziyad Fari, Amir Barakat, Khamis Ghaith, Mohammad Shalhat and Under Shalhat.

Seoul 1988: Jordan was among 160 countries with a 16-member delegation including 10 athletes in wrestling, table tennis, boxing, fencing and track and field. The athletes were: Samir Kamal and Hussein Abu Shalhat. Jordan's participation in the Games was limited to 10 countries. The athletes were: Abdul Majid Abdel Qader, Rafe F. Fader, Ziyad Fari, Amir Barakat, Khamis Ghaith, Mohammad Shalhat and Under Shalhat.

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Athletes queuing up for 'alternative' massage

ATLANTA (R) — Finding the Swedish equestrian squad in a massage parlour a week before the games, accompanied by a leading Australian weightlifter, is the sort of Olympic story to give organising committees heart failure.

For once they can relax, which is exactly what Patty Beggs and her trained staff are trying to encourage in their soothing spa inside the Games village. If they are to be believed, the coming weeks in Atlanta will challenge conventional wisdom as to how athletes should prepare for big events.

For the first time in Olympic history, competitors are being offered a range of alternative treatments, including aromatherapy and steam therapy, designed to allow them to "de-stress" in the build-up to the most important days of their careers.

Demand has been so heavy the spa is fully booked several days ahead, and Beggs believes it could even persuade athletes who use performance-enhancing drugs to change their ways.

"This is the best way to make them feel good. It works better than steroids," said Beggs, who can offer between 50 and 60 full treatments per day. "They're all walking out saying 'how come we feel this great?'"

Many of the treatments are based around the use of essential oils, although Beggs has had to avoid any substances which might attract the interest of the doping laboratories.

"We're using lavender, rosemary, sage and eucalyptus, and everything is absorbed through the body anyway," she said.

"We're here to de-stress

the athletes, but it's not about pampering and false promises. I think we're setting a precedent."

The Australian television crew who slipped behind the bamboo screens for a closer look certainly emerged with some rare footage, but it remains to be seen whether the spa will continue to outweigh alternative village attractions.

The bubble-bath pool in the athletes' disco, already dubbed "the grope pit", is proving popular and several competitors seem to be spending at least as much time playing virtual reality laser games as training for their events.

Back in the spa, though, each masseuse preaches the same message. "If you don't look after your body," runs the slogan on every T-shirt, "where are you going to live?"

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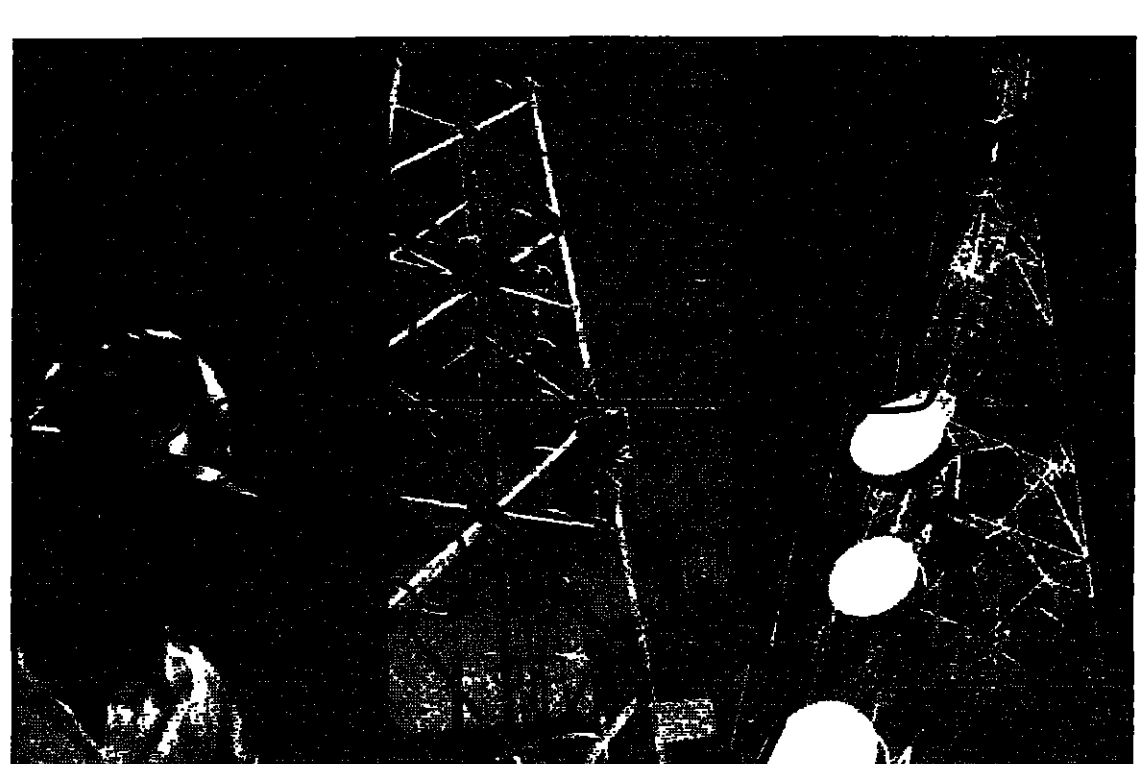
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Kuwait parliamentarians agree to secret debate on Iraqi invasion report

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Parliament agreed on Saturday to a government request to discuss in private a report investigating the failings of Kuwait's military leadership and organisation during the Iraqi invasion.

Opposition members of the national assembly (parliament) walked out of the closed session in protest saying the government had reneged on its promise for an open discussion and the Kuwaiti people had now been effectively excluded from the debate.

"Democracy is not practiced behind closed doors," said liberal Deputy Abdullah Al Nabbari, a member of the nine-strong parliamentary fact-finding committee that prepared the report.

Deputies expected to debate on Saturday the third and final section of a parliamentary investigation into the organisation of the armed forces before the Iraqi invasion in August 1990 and the

efforts to rebuild the forces since liberation in February 1991.

"The value of this report is the discussion in public," said Mr. Nabbari, after walking out of the closed session with several other opposition deputies.

Members of the committee have previously said that one of the main findings was the failure in the political and military chain of command, which enabled Iraqi troops to overrun Kuwaiti forces within hours of crossing the border in August 1990.

Minister of state for cabinet affairs Abdel Aziz Dakhil requested a secret session "to protect the highest interests of unity for the country and to ensure the enemy did not benefit from the debate."

He said the cabinet had urged Crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah not to attend the session, despite earlier government assurances that the prime minister would respond in person

to deputies questions.

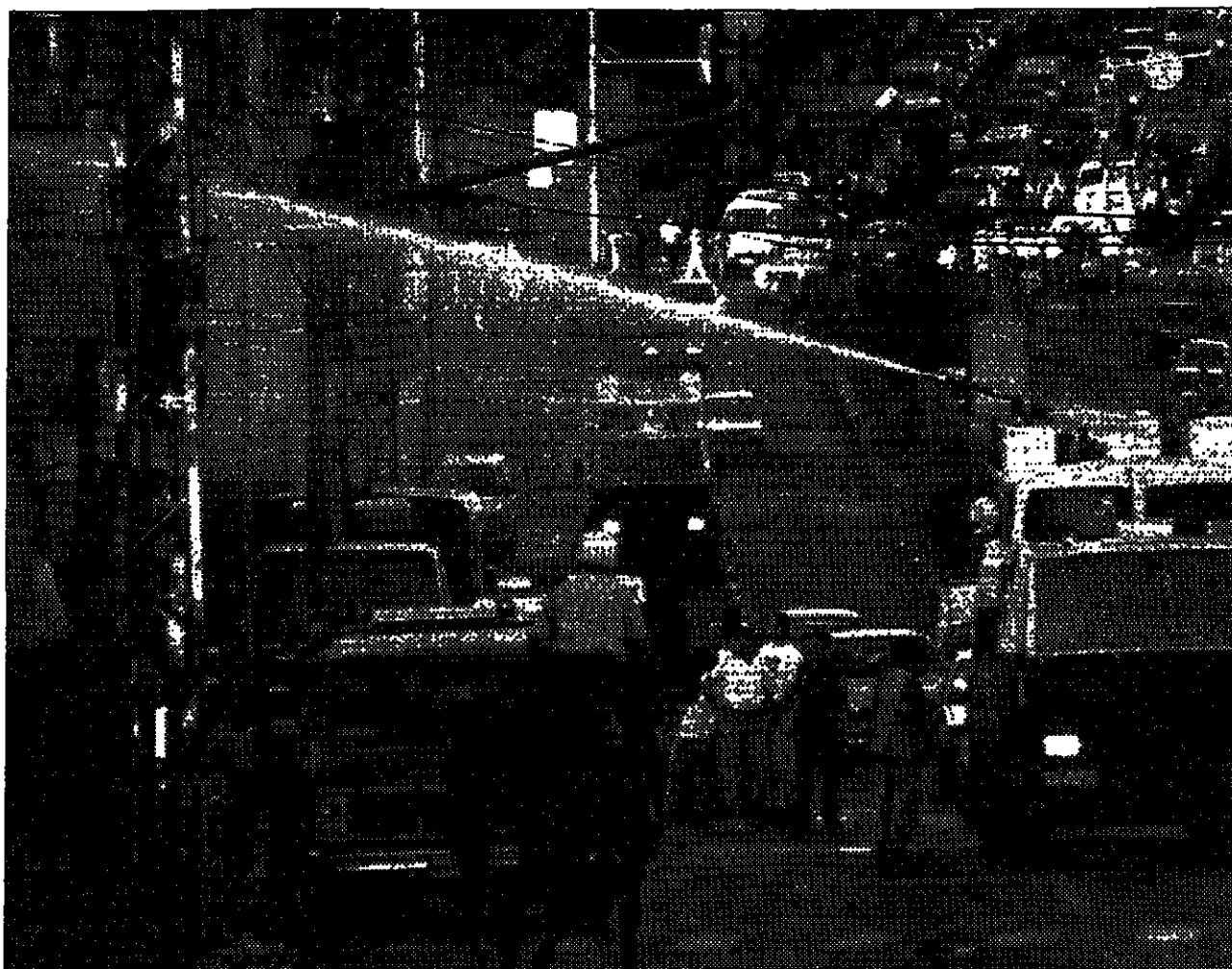
Islamist Deputy Nasser Al Sania said the government had reneged on "a very clear promise" for an open session in the presence of Sheikh Saad when it delayed the debate in parliament two weeks ago.

The fact-finding committee into the Iraqi invasion has spent four years preparing the report, which is more than 500 pages long and divided into three sections.

Two sections, covering political issues and defence contracts, have been discussed, while the military report is the last section to be debated.

Opposition MPs accepted that recommendations for the future of the military should be kept secret, but said the rest of the report should be open to public debate.

"We think that we should benefit from this study," said Mr. Sania, who added that the Kuwaiti people had now been denied the opportunity to participate.



A police water-cannon fires into an alleyway off Bar Ilan Street as police use the cannon backed by mounted police to disperse thousands of protesters trying to block the main road Saturday. Police clashed with the Jews who are seeking the closure of two main Jerusalem roads during the Sabbath (Reuters photo)

Thousands of Jewish protesters hurl garbage, stones at motorists

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Thousands of ultra-orthodox Jews on Saturday hurled garbage and stones at a convoy of cars driving along a Jerusalem thoroughfare that has become a symbol of the increasingly bitter battle between religious and secular Israelis.

Police sprayed water from cannons to try and disperse the about 5,000 protesters, many of them dressed in long black coats despite the summer heat.

Shouts of "Nazis, Nazis" rose from the crowd. Mounted policemen charged and clubbed demonstrators trying to make a break from the sidewalk and block disputed Bar Ilan Street.

Jerusalem police chief Arieh Amit said a motorcycle rider was beaten by a

group of protesters who broke one of his hands. Ten demonstrators were arrested, Mr. Amit said.

Most of the motorists were secular rights activists from the left-wing Meretz Party who drove down Bar Ilan Street demonstratively to counter demands by ultra-orthodox Jews that the street be closed during the Jewish Sabbath.

Protesters threw garbage and some stones at about 50 cars which bore stickers reading "Bar Ilan will not close." One ultra-orthodox man spit at a passing car, and others booed. Some people standing on rooftops and balconies yelled "Shabbos, Shabbos."

"This is a Jewish state run by Nazi police," said one ultra-orthodox woman, who gave her name only as

Rachel, as she stood in the crowd with her four young children.

"The Sabbath is holy to the Jews. If these aren't Jews," she said, pointing to the Meretz convoy, "they shouldn't be here."

The Sabbath, which lasts from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday, is the Biblically mandated day of rest. Most activities, including work and driving, are prohibited.

Bar Ilan Street connects several neighbourhoods in northern Jerusalem, including a religious one.

Secular rights activists say the ultra-orthodox have no right to impose their life style on others. About 70 per cent of the Jews in Israel are secular and 30 per cent are observant.

Bar Ilan Street has been

the site of frequent violent demonstrations by ultra-orthodox in recent years. The fate of the thoroughfare has become a symbol for the "culture war" between ultra-orthodox and secular Jews.

Earlier this week, the new government of right-wing and religious parties ordered Bar Ilan Street closed during most of the Jewish Sabbath. Secular rights activists appealed to the supreme court which issued a temporary injunction and scheduled a hearing on the issue for the end of June.

Angered by the decision, hundreds of ultra-orthodox men stoned police along the street Friday night. A police officers was slightly hurt and several cars were damaged.

Over a quarter of Egypt's parliamentary election results annulled by supreme court

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt's supreme court has ordered election results in over a quarter of the seats of Egypt's parliament to be annulled due to voting "irregularities and fraud", legal sources said Saturday.

Appeals were filed in almost all the 444 seats elected in last November's vote. So far the supreme court has annulled the results in 120 seats, most of them held by pro-government deputies.

The court has refused appeals in 110 seats and has still to rule on nearly 200 others, the sources said.

But parliament itself has the final decision whether to follow the court's ruling, according to laws saying no deputy can be removed except by a two-thirds vote in the assembly, the sources said.

The people's assembly (parliament), dominated by the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP), has yet to comment on the rulings, but it has never applied similar rulings after the 1990 elections.

In the 120 annulled seats, the court noted "several cases of irregularity and fraud," including "the listing of deceased persons and people out of the coun-

try as having voted" in the districts, the sources said. The Egyptian government has admitted "irregularities" occurred during the vote, but has denied accusations by the opposition that it conducted an organised fraud campaign in the vote to assure victory.

Among the annulled districts are ones won by Social Affairs Minister Amal Osman over the Muslim Brotherhood member Maamun Al Hodeibi and by Youth and Sports Director Abdel Menem Emara over Islamist writer Adel Hussein.

Mr. Hussein told AFP that "from the legal point of view, the parliament has the right to ignore the verdicts", pointing out that "around 30 seats were ordered annulled from the 1990 vote" but never implemented. "But this time, the number is more than 100, which places the government in a tight spot. To ignore the verdicts would be an outrage against justice, so this time the parliament may implement some of them," he said. The people's assembly has a total of 454 seats. 10 of them appointed by President Hosni Mubarak.

Arafat sends message to Iraqi leader

Message deals with bilateral relations, Cairo summit

BAGHDAD (R) — A Palestinian official said on Saturday he had delivered a written message from President Yasser Arafat for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on bilateral relations and Arab issues.

"I delivered on Wednesday to Iraq's Foreign Minister Mohammed Saeed Al Sahaf a written message from President Yasser Arafat to President Saddam Hussein," Minister of Public Works in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) Azzam Al Ahmed told reporters in Baghdad.

Mr. Ahmed, who is also

the Palestinian ambassador to Iraq, said he had briefed Iraqi officials on contacts the authority had made with the United Nations to allow it to import \$50 million worth of oil which Iraq pledged to donate to the Palestinians in 1990.

He said the authority had made similar contacts with the United States as a member of a U.N. committee overseeing trade sanctions, including a ban on oil exports, imposed on Iraq for invading Kuwait in 1990.

Mr. Ahmed said he had discussed with officials in Baghdad the possibility of importing Iraqi oil to West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Iraq's Oil Minister Amir Muhammad Rasheed said this year that Baghdad was ready to supply the Palestinians with oil.

The Palestinian minister

also said he had met Massoud Rajavi, the leader of the Iraq-based Iranian opposition group Mujahideen Khalq.

"I met with the leader of Mujahideen Khalq Massoud Rajavi as part of the coordination between our organisation and Mujahideen Khalq," Mr. Ahmed told Reuters.

He said a delegation from Mujahideen, which has assembled an army equipped with tanks and helicopters in camps in Iraq to topple the Tehran government, would soon visit the Gaza Strip.

Iran opposes the Israel-PLO peace process. Mr. Arafat accuses Tehran of backing militant Muslim Palestinian groups which try to derail the peace process by bomb attacks in Israel.

Bosnian Serb leader says Bosnia should stay split

BELGRADE (R) — Vice-president of the Bosnian Serb Republic Biljana Plavsic said the Bosnian Serbs would continue to struggle for independence and to keep Bosnia divided despite the international effort to reunify the country.

"An extremely difficult diplomatic struggle lies ahead to defend what the Dayton agreement gave us — a significant level of statehood for the Bosnian Serb Republic," she said in an interview to be published in the daily Dnevnik on Sunday, quoted by the state news agency Tanjug.

Most diplomats and international mediators interpret the Dayton peace deal as paving the way for a reunified multi-ethnic Bosnia, divided only into administrative regions.

Ms. Plavsic conceded the Bosnian Serbs would benefit economically by being members of a Bosnian community, but she said ultimately the Serbs must fight to preserve their hard-won "statehood".

"We must not allow ourselves to be drawn into a unitary, sovereign and indivisible Bosnia-Herzegovina, as propagated by (President) Alija Izetbegovic, because we would very soon become a second-rate people, as would the Croats," she said.

"A divided Bosnia is a reality that must be accepted," Ms. Plavsic told the paper, insisting that any attempt to rebuild a multi-ethnic Bosnia would spark a renewed conflict.

Ms. Plavsic is deputy to Bosnian Serb President Radovan Karadzic, who handed his official duties to her two weeks ago under pressure from the international community.

Thais, S. Koreans held for slaughter of bears

Thais, S. Koreans held for slaughter of bears

BANGKOK (R) — Thai police arrested five South Koreans and three Thais after finding the remains of at least six bears in their vehicle, police said Friday. The South Koreans, three men and two women, and the Thais were being held in Ayutthaya province on charges relating to the slaughter of endangered species, police said. Police found the torsos and paws of the animals in the group's van late Wednesday during a routine check on a highway north of Bangkok. Police said they suspected the bears may have been smuggled in from Burma. The suspects face up to four years in prison if convicted, police said.

2 Chinese held for trafficking panda skin

BEIJING (AFP) — Police in the central Chinese province of Henan have arrested two men for attempting to sell a giant panda skin, a crime that can carry the death penalty, the China Youth daily said. The two men, identified only by their surnames Yuan and Wang, were caught carrying the skin out of a village near the city of Yuzhou in Henan, the newspaper said. Mr. Yuan confessed to killing the panda in his home province of Sichuan — the endangered animal's natural habitat — in October last year. Mr. Yuan asked Mr. Wang to find him a buyer, which proved a difficult task given the pair's asking price of around 600,000 yuan (\$72,000). Having located a buyer in the southern province of Guangdong, the two men were preparing to move the skin when they were caught. There are only some 1,000 giant pandas surviving in the wild and Chinese zoos, and the animals are under intense state protection that provides the death penalty for poachers and smugglers.

Chicken-based powder lifts what Prozac can't

NASHVILLE (R) — Scientists promoting an aphrodisiac made from fertilised chicken eggs said the powder may provide a lift for men taking Prozac and other anti-depressant drugs who find their sexual drive diminished. Up to one-third of men who take the popular anti-depressant Prozac suffer loss of sexual drive, which "Libido" can counteract, Jerald Bain, an obstetrician at the University of Toronto said at a news conference. Preliminary studies showed improved sexual potency in men who consumed one drink or shake each day containing the powder, which was hatched by scientists from Canada, Norway and the United States based on aphrodisiacs in use in Asia.

Cubans hunt wild dogs inhabiting offshore islets

HAVANA (R) — Cuban police and animal control experts are using traps and explosives to try to exterminate packs of wild dogs that live on islets off the northern coast, national media reported. The Cuban news agency Prensa Latina said the dogs, more than 100 in all, were a threat to local wildlife and visitors to the uninhabited islets north of Matanzas province. The dogs were believed to be domestic breeds that had gone wild and bred rapidly. It was not known how they settled on the islets.

Oran to sue Toujan Faisal once more

By Rana Hussein

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Samir Oran, who last week won a lawsuit against Lower House of Parliament Deputy Toujan Faisal, Saturday said she was planning to file another lawsuit against the deputy following an interview Ms. Faisal gave to a weekly tabloid.

On July 7, a court in Wadi Seer sentenced Ms. Faisal to a two-month jail sentence and ordered her to pay JD 6,000 in compensation to Ms. Oran for libel and defamation.

Ms. Oran had accused the defendant of tarnishing her image and meddling in her private life by publicly criticising her in a tabloid article. Ms. Oran demanded JD 15,000 in compensation for damage.

"I will not be quiet about any press statements made by Toujan Faisal because she is tarnishing my image inside and outside the country and I am planning to sue her," Ms. Oran told the Jordan Times Saturday.

Ms. Oran was reacting to an interview with Ms. Faisal published last week in the weekly tabloid newspaper Shilhan.

In the interview, Ms. Faisal said she did not want to interfere in the life of Ms.

Oran and her husband adding that in the article she had written earlier she was only responding to the complaints made by Ms. Oran.

Ms. Oran had initially written to the speaker of the Lower House of Parliament complaining about excesses she claimed had been committed by ministers and deputies in discussing an alleged marital problem she faced and which involved a former minister.

When asked by the newspaper why she did not attend the court sessions, Ms. Faisal responded: "I am not concerned with love affairs and adventures of some ministers or officials because I have more important issues such as corruption to follow up on."

Ms. Oran refused to comment on the interview.

"I cannot comment on anything right now because I am waiting for the (Court of Appeals) ruling before saying anything," Ms. Oran told the Jordan Times.

But she said she was planning to hold a press conference after the case was settled "to explain some important issues". She refused to elaborate.

Monzer Hammo, Ms. Toujan's attorney, said he was planning to appeal the verdict against his client today.

Sudanese publishing house ordered closed

CAIRO (AP) — The government has withdrawn the licences of a newspaper publishing house known for its criticism of the Sudanese regime. Egypt's Middle East news agency reported Saturday.

The closure of the Dar Al Ahlah publishing house will force the suspension of Al Rai Al Akher, or the other viewpoint, which is one of Sudan's most outspoken and popular independent newspapers.

The daily has frequently run afoul of the government. Last year the paper was suspended over a series on the policies of President Omar Al Bashir. Last May it was suspended again because of an article that reported that 95 soldiers were involved in a failed coup attempt.

A second Dar Al Ahlah paper being shut is Al Majalis, or the councils. Sudan's publications council accused Al Majalis of incitement and of fabricating stories.

MENA quoted the government-run National Council for Journalism and Publications as saying Al-Ahlah "was no longer capable of bearing the trust of journalistic work, because it directs the journalists to incitement which threatens the security and stability of Sudan."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Libya begins live-fire manoeuvres

CAIRO (AP) — The Libyan air force has begun live-fire manoeuvres along the Mediterranean coast that will last for several days, Libya's official JANA news agency reported. The dispatch late Friday did not say exactly where the manoeuvres are being held but said they involved "a mock enemy landing in a selected region on the Libyan coast." JANA, which is monitored in Cairo, said a variety of aircraft were taking part and were hitting their targets "with great precision." Libya had announced the exercises earlier by issuing a public warning to bedouins and other travellers to take care in areas along the coast. The warnings carried by JANA did not include specific locations.

10 killed in train accident in Turkey

BALIKESIR, Turkey (AP) — At least 10 people were killed Saturday when a train rammed into their minibus in this western city, the Anatolia news agency reported. The "Aegean Express" travelling between the town of Eskisehir, central Turkey, and the western port city of Izmir, hit the minibus at a crossing, the agency said. It was not clear what caused the accident.

Three Oufkir children arrive in France

PARIS (R) — Three children of former Moroccan Defence Minister Mohammed Oufkir, who died after a failed coup against King Hassan in 1972, were finally allowed to fly to France on Saturday after long being banned from leaving Morocco. Soukaina, Raouf and Malika Oufkir arrived at Paris' Orly airport on Saturday after being granted visas, less than a month after another Oufkir daughter, Maria, and two other relatives, were smuggled out of Morocco via Spain and fled to France. After Maria Oufkir was spirited to the Spanish enclave of Ceuta, east of Tangier, aboard a boat by a French film-maker, the Moroccan authorities issued a statement on June 25 saying the Oufkir family was free to leave.

Yanhu announces the

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin announced Sunday that he would visit the United States to discuss the peace process with President Bill Clinton. Rabin said he would also meet with Vice President Al Gore and Secretary of State James Baker. The visit is part of a series of diplomatic efforts to advance the peace process. Rabin said he would also discuss the situation in the Middle East with the President and Vice President.

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Yemeni minister

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Wish troops kill

Kurdish rebels in the southern province of Guangdong, the two men were preparing to move the skin when they were caught. There are only some 1,000 giant pandas surviving in the wild and Chinese zoos, and the animals are under intense state protection that provides the death penalty for poachers and smugglers.

Year-old

After a long and difficult journey, the Oufkir family finally arrived in France. The children, Maria, Soukaina, Raouf, and Malika, were welcomed by their relatives and friends. The family's arrival in France marks a significant moment in their lives, as they are finally able to live in their home country. The Oufkir family's story is a testament to the power of perseverance and the importance of family.